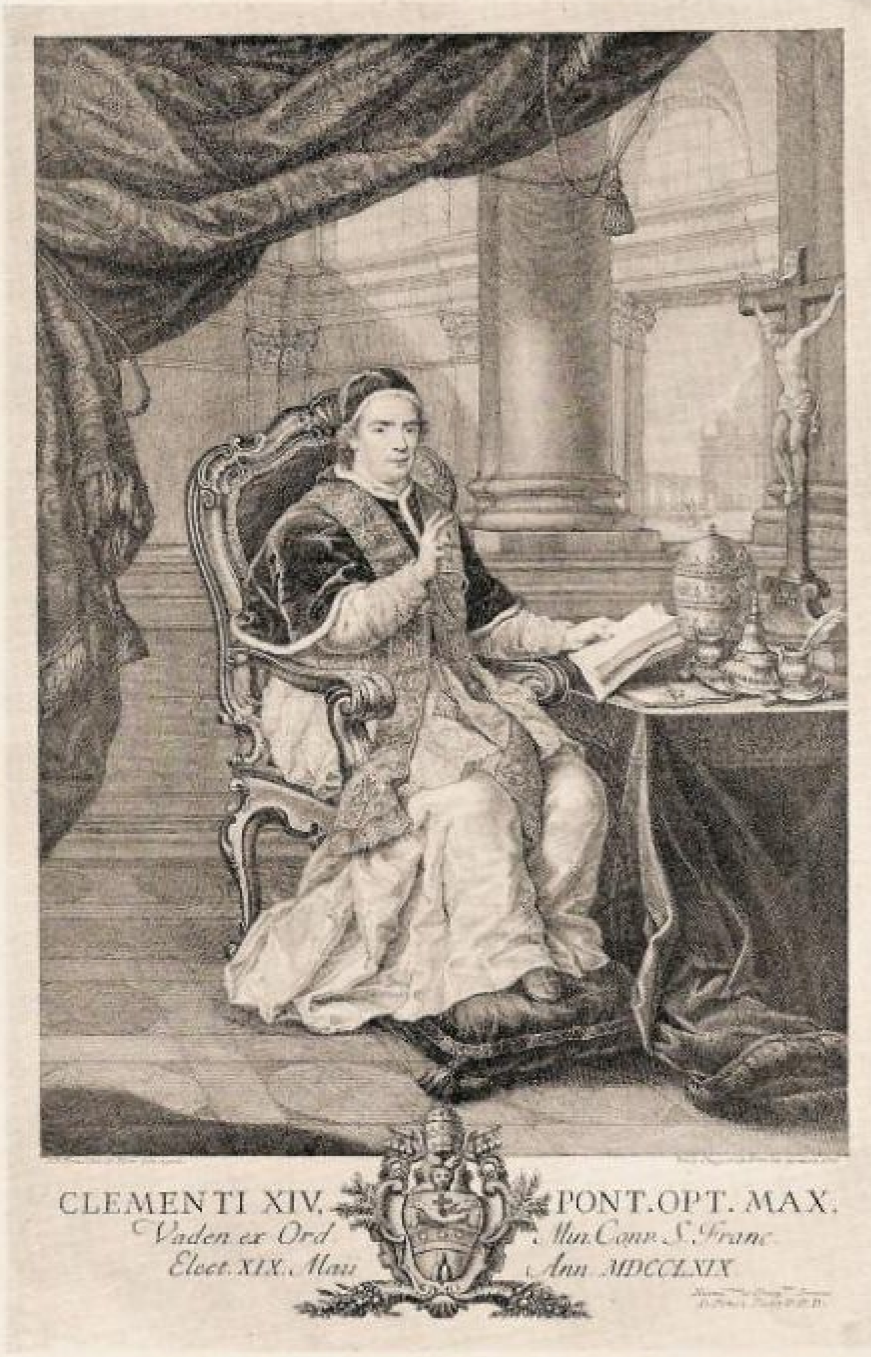
THE RITUAL MURDER LIBEL AND THE JEW

THE REPORT BY CARDINAL LORENZO GANGANELLI
(POPE CLEMENT XIV.)

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(Pope Clement XIV.)
on the 160th anniversary of his death.



[*Frontispiece*

CARDINAL LORENZO GANGANELLI
(Pope Clement XIV)

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I

ON Easter Eve, 1144, the dead body of a young skinner's-apprentice, named William, was found in a wood near Norwich. Modern enquirers, after careful examination of the facts, have concluded that the child probably lost consciousness in consequence of a cataleptic fit, and was buried prematurely by his relatives. It was bruited about, however, that in fact he was a victim of the Jews, who had enticed him away from his family and crucified him, after synagogue service on the second day of Passover, in mockery of the Passion of Jesus. In consequence, a wave of religious frenzy swept the city. The body was buried with all solemnity at the Cathedral, where miracles were said to be wrought at the grave-side. That the Jews escaped massacre was mainly due to the cool-headedness of the Sheriff, who permitted them to seek refuge in the royal castle and (realising that in the prevailing state of public opinion impartiality was not to be expected) refused to allow judicial proceedings to be opened against them. However, long after they ventured out, they continued to be in danger, and at least one of the leading members of the community was murdered. For many years after, when the Jew had long been a stranger to England, the relics of William of Norwich were popularly venerated as those of a martyr.[1]

This was the first instance known to Western history of the infamous Ritual Murder Accusation, which has caused such untold misery to the Jewish people from that day to this.[2] This absurdity, in its final development, is based upon the hypothesis that the Jews require and employ human blood for purposes

[1] A. Jessop and M. R. James: *The Life and Miracles of St. William of Norwich, by Thomas of Monmouth* (Cambridge, 1896).

[2] Socrates, the fifth-century ecclesiastical historian, reports something vaguely similar as having occurred at Inmestar, in Syria, about 415: while according to Josephus a similar libel was current at the time of Jesus with regard to the Temple worship. Anterior to the episode of William of Norwich, however, here is an apparent blank of 700 years.

which stand in close relation to their ritual observances, more particularly in connexion with the Passover: and that, in order to obtain such blood, they do not scruple to commit murder. In most instances, the victim is said to be a Christian child—generally a boy. The example of mob-hysteria set at Norwich was followed at Gloucester in 1168, before it had time to be imitated outside England. Three years later, with the terrible tragedy of Blois and its ghastly toll of human lives, it obtained its first foothold on the Continent. Here it

recurred thereafter with increasing frequency. Upwards of one hundred and fifty episodes of the sort are listed in the standard works of reference: yet these do not constitute, in all probability, more than a fraction of the whole. In almost every case the accusation has been followed by wholesale arrests, by spoliation, frequently by massacre.

The advance of civilisation did not bring about the disappearance of the preposterous idea. The nineteenth century proved, in this respect, little less credulous than those which preceded it. This absurdity provided the spark which led to the outbreak at Yelisavetgrad, on April 27th 1881, of the wave of pogroms which stained the last years of the old Russian Empire, constituting one of the greatest tragedies of the sort in the recent history of the human race. The anti-Semitic movement owed its consolidation in the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary to a revival which took place in the eighteen-eighties. In the five-year period between 1887 and 1891, at least twenty-two cases were more or less formally raised in Europe. An episode at Corfu in the last-named year (with a refinement of absurdity, the alleged victim in this case was a Jewess!) brought on an outbreak which caused the dispersal of the ancient community of that island; order being restored only on the arrival of a British flotilla, despatched at the request of the Consul General. In 1892, the charge was brought up by an irresponsible journalist in France. The year 1893 saw cases at Holleschau (Moravia) and at Rahova (Bulgaria), to mention only two out of many. There were *causes célèbres,* accompanied by judicial action (leading of course in every case to acquittal), at Tisza-Eszlar in Hungary (1882), Xanten on the Rhineland (1891) and Könitz in Prussia (1900). In 1911-13, Russia was convulsed by a similar process at Kiev. Thus the miserable

record, with its trail of suffering, repeated itself year after year, notwithstanding the progress of civilisation, of science, and of humanity.

Even to-day (it seems hardly credible in this enlightened age) the infection continues latent. Hardly a year passes but the loss or accidental death of some child leads to a recurrence of the libel, with more or less serious results, somewhere in Eastern Europe. A trial based upon it, in a slightly milder form, recently occupied, over a long period, the attention of the courts of justice in the new republic of Czecho-Slovakia. Only a year or two ago, the story was seriously revived in the course of an investigation by an ignorant police official in a provincial town in the United States: while in 1933 it was re-affirmed by means of anonymous leaflets in California. Even in England it has made its appearance in a literary form—on one occasion, owing to editorial carelessness, in the pages of one of the most widely read and highly respected quarterly reviews: on another, in an historical work which received the commendation of the Book Society on the one hand, and of the British Broadcasting Corporation on the other.

Anti-Semitic circles on the Continent, above all, still profess to regard Ritual Murder as a fundamental Jewish practice. Nazi propagandists in Germany, even before their accession to power, issued periodical warnings to the general population to take special care of their

children at Passover time in view of Jewish ritual requirements: and it would not be surprising if semi-official encouragement were to bring about in that country, in the near future, a major tragedy reminiscent of the Middle Ages at their worst.[1] That serious attention should be devoted to the grotesque allegation to-day, when by all logical criteria it should be no more than an antiquarian diversion, is not therefore a waste of time: for at any moment it may become grim reality,

[1] These lines were written before the revival of the libel in its most revolting form, in the spring of 1934, in the now notorious Ritual Murder issue of the official Nazi organ, *Der Stuermer*, of Nuremberg, edited by Julius Streicher. The storm of indignation which this occasioned in foreign countries, led in England by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was probably responsible for the fact that it did not cause a physical outbreak, as was widely dreaded at the time. It is significant that the German government did not repudiate the publication or take steps to prevent its circulation in the Reich; see *infra* pp. 94-7.

imperilling the credit of a whole people, the well-being of entire communities, and the safety of thousands of lives.

Even to the crassest mediæval credulity, the extravagance of the hypothesis should have been self-evident. There is of course not the remotest authority for it in Jewish literature or law: and no impartial trial based upon it has resulted otherwise than in acquittal. Even were the Jew considered capable of habitual homicide, and courageous enough to perpetrate it notwithstanding the precariousness of his position, there was more than one incidental consideration which would have prevented him from doing so. The object of Ritual Murder (as has been indicated) is said to be the securing of blood, to be used in connexion with the Passover rites. But the consumption of blood, in any shape or form or quantity, was forbidden categorically to the Jew by the Mosaic code, in more than one explicit passage (Leviticus, xvii. 10-14: Deuteronomy, xii. 16, 23-25): and the Rabbinical interpreters elaborated and intensified the prohibition to an almost extravagant degree. Human flesh, moreover, was technically considered 'unclean', and not included amongst the categories which might be eaten according to the *Torah.* A conforming Jew would thus have submitted to the worst torments rather than allow a particle of human blood (thus doubly forbidden) to pass his lips.

As to the general question, indeed, it is impossible to improve upon the words used by Menasseh ben Israel in pleading before Oliver Cromwell in 1657 for the readmission of the Jews to England, and solemnly repeated by Chief Rabbi Solomon Herschell nearly a century ago, at the time of the Damascus Blood Accusation of 1840:—

> "I swear, without any deceit or fraud, by the most high God, the creatour of heaven and earth, who promulgated his law to the people of Israel, upon Mount *Sinai,* that I never yet to this day saw any such custome among the people of Israel, and that they doe not hold any such thing by divine precept of the law, or any ordinance or institution of their wise men, and that they never committed or endeavoured such wickednesse, (that I know, or have credibly heard, or read in any Jewish Authours)

> and if I lie in this matter, then let all the curses mentioned in *Leviticus* and

> *Deuteronomy* come upon me, let me never see the blessings and consolations of Zion, nor attain to the resurrection of the dead." (*Vindiciæ Judæorum,* Section I, § xii.)

To this solemn pronouncement, no Jew would for one moment hesitate to add his personal *Amen*!

II

To its lasting credit, the Catholic Church (even when the night of mediævalism was at its darkest) never gave the slightest countenance to the calumny. Immediately the Holy See first became cognizant of it, in the thirteenth century, its remonstrances began: and they continued afterwards in unbroken sequence. It is noteworthy that some of the most vehement protests emanated from the Pontiffs who otherwise shewed themselves least sympathetic towards the Jews, their objectivity thus being all the more obvious. Time after time, when popular passion brought on a new outbreak, the voice of moderation, sanity and Christian feeling at its truest was heard from Rome. Never was the libel raised under official auspices in the States of the Church—a statement applicable to few other parts of Europe. On almost every occasion, the Papacy resolutely refused to set the seal of official approval upon the beatification of supposititious victims demanded by the ignorant. In no respect does the policy of the Holy See towards the Jew, essentially humane according to the standard of the age even when it could not be benevolent, appear in a nobler light.

The earliest official Papal pronouncement in this connexion was occasioned by the Ritual Murder accusation at Valréas, in the south of France, in 1247. On being appealed to by the victims for protection, Pope Innocent IV. censured in unsparing language the condemnation of Jews, without legal conviction or confession, by those 'covetous of their possessions or thirsting for their blood . . . contrary to the clemency of the Catholic faith'.[1] On July 5th of the same year, he condemned the Libel categorically in his famous Encyclical, *Lachrymabilem Judæorum Alemannie,* addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops of Germany and France. Here, as it appears from this docu-

[1] E. Berger: *Registres d'Innocent IV.* (Bibliothèque des écoles francaises d'Athènes et de Rome, Paris, 1884-1911), § 2838. See also S. Grayzel: *The Church and the Jews in the Thirteenth Century,* Philadelphia, 1933, § § 113 and 114.

ment, cases had become more and more common in recent years. Whenever a corpse was found, the responsibility for the death was assigned to the Jews: though the Pope himself considered that the accusation generally had no more solid basis than the disinclination of Christian debtors to pay what they owed.[1] Finally, in confirming the *Constitutio Judeorum* (the protective Bull first published by Calixtus II. in 1120, and periodically reissued by successive Pontiffs after that date), Innocent added the following trenchant clause, which not only condemned the libel, but forbade faithful Christians outright to participate in its propagation:—[2]

> "Nor shall anyone accuse them [the Jews] of using human blood in their religious rites, since in the Old Testament they are instructed not to use blood of any kind, let alone human blood. But since at Fulda and in several other places many Jews were killed on the ground of such a suspicion, we, by the authority of these presents, strictly forbid that this should be repeated in future. If anyone knowing the tenor of this decree should, God forbid, dare to oppose it, he shall be punished by loss of his rank and office, or be placed under a sentence of excommunication, unless he makes proper amends for his presumption".

The lead thus set was nobly and consistently followed by Innocent's successors. In 1272, in confirming the *Constitutio*, Gregory X. similarly added a lengthy allusion to the Libel, which he condemned in unequivocal terms:

> "It sometimes happens that certain Christians lose their Christian children. The charge is then made against the Jews by their enemies that they have stolen and slain these children in secret, and have sacrificed the heart and blood. The fathers of the said children, or other Christians who are

[1] The full text of this important document is given below in an English translation, as an appendix to these pages. The most telling passages are quoted in the original in the Report of Cardinal Ganganelli, *infra* pp. 46 and 47.

[2] Celakovsky, Jaromir: *Privilegia Civitatum Pragensium,* Prague, 1866, p. 9: Grayzel, § 118: [M. Stern] *Die Päpstlichen Bullen über die Blutbeschuldigung,* Berlin, 1893, pp. 14-17. The document, apparently published on July 9th 1247, was re-issued with the same addition six years later.

> envious of the Jews, even hide their children in order to have a pretext to molest the Jews, and to extort money from them so as to pay their dues. They assert thereupon, most falsely, that the Jews have taken away these children and slain them, and have sacrificed the heart and blood. Yet their law expressly forbids the Jews to sacrifice or to eat or drink blood: even though it be of animals which have the hoof cloven. This has been confirmed in our *curia* on many occasions by Jews

> converted to the Christian faith. None the less, on this pretext many Jews have frequently been seized and detained, against all justice. We accordingly have determined that no Christian shall be allowed to make any allegations against the Jews on such a pretext. We command, moreover, that the Jews imprisoned on this account shall be released from prison, and that they shall not be arrested again on such groundless charge unless (which we think impossible) they are captured in flagrant crime".[1]

Some such clause was frequently part of the formula as it figured in subsequent re-issues. Thus, in 1422, when Pope Martin V. was applied to by persecuted Jews for his protection from the Libel, which had again raised its head, he proceeded in accordance with the tradition set by his predecessors, and stigmatised the accusation that the Jews mingle blood with their unleavened bread as being "a charge brought unjustly against them".[2] When, in the sixteenth century, the charge was once more brought up in Central Europe, Pope Paul III., in his bull *Licet Judæi,* addressed to the Bishops of Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland (1540), reverted to the subject:

> "We have heard with displeasure from the complaints of the Jews of those countries", he wrote, "how for some years past, certain magistrates and other officials, bitter and mortal enemies of the Jews, blinded by hate and envy, or as is more probable by cupidity, pretend, in order to despoil

[1] *Ibid.,* pp. 18-23; M. Stern: *Urkundliche Beiträge über die Stellung der Päpste zu den Juden,* Kiel, 1893, § 1.

[2] *Analecta juris pontifici,* XII., 1873, p. 328: *Die Päpstlichen Bullen über die Blutbeschuldigung,* pp. 24-29.

> them of their goods, that the Jews kill little children and drink their blood".

This allegation was made (the Pope continued) in order to exacerbate the feeling of simple Christians against them: in consequence of which the Jews were unjustly deprived, not only of their possessions, but in many cases also of their lives. On the application of the sufferers, the Supreme Pontiff now renewed all the privileges and protection which his predecessors had published in their favour, in connexion with this matter, in the past.[1]

These pronouncements indicated, as plainly as words could do, the official attitude of the Papacy and of the Catholic Church. They were at hand, in the official collections, for reference in case of need: and at intervals they would be adverted to if the necessity arose. This proved sufficient until a terrible recrudescence brought the question forward, with tragic insistence, once again.

[1] *Ibid.* pp. 30-36: Cf. *Oesterreichische Wochenschrift,* 1889, p. 352: *Revue des Etudes Juives,* XXV. 175-6.

III

FROM the middle of the seventeenth century, the calumny (never much more than dormant) raised its head once more in Poland, on a scale more vast than ever before. The Polish people—poverty-stricken, superstitious, fanatical—found a scapegoat for their sufferings in their Jewish neighbours, who had for so long lived unmolested in their midst. The prevalent misconception regarding the Blood Libel afforded them at once a pretext and a motive force: and it spread with alarming rapidity. Already as early as 1650, in response to an appeal from the unhappy sufferers, Giovanni Battista de' Marini, Vicar General of the Dominican Order, issued instructions from Rome to the Polish members of his Order to fight against the Libel from their pulpits. This had little or no effect: and not long after, there began a series of incidents which completely outshadowed anything of the sort which had preceded.

The epidemic reached its height in 1698, with a gruesome episode at Sandomir. Here, in order to divert suspicion from herself, a woman of easy morals threw the dead body of her illegitimate son into the yard of a Jewish elder named Berek (Baer). He was immediately arrested and put on trial for Ritual Murder. A fanatical priest, one Zhukhovski, took advantage of the opportunity to publish a work in which he referred in venomous terms to two other recent episodes for which (as he alleged) the Jews of the city had been responsible. The local court exculpated the accused: and the case was then brought before the highest tribunal in the land, that of Lublin. Torture was lavishly employed, and met with the expected result. The unfortunate Berek was condemned to death and barbarously executed (1710). Subsequently, in punishment for a crime of which only one of its members had been convicted, the whole Jewish community was expelled from the city.

Later, Father Zhukhovski instigated a converted Jew named Serafinovicz to compose a work in which the Blood Libel was repeated in grotesque detail. The renegade was summoned by a

few courageous Jews to meet them in a public disputation, in the presence of bishops and other dignitaries of the Church. He failed to put in an appearance, as an official affidavit attested. Nevertheless, his scurrilous work was re-published more than once in subsequent years, occasioning a hideous and protracted anti-Jewish agitation.[1]

The memory of this episode was still fresh when, in 1736, the dead body of a Christian child was found near Posen. A beggar-woman, who was observed near the corpse, was arrested and put to the torture. This elicited from her the allegation that she had sold the child to the elders of the local synagogue. Several arrests followed, one of the first being that of the preacher, Aryeh Loeb Calahorra—a descendant of an Italian apothecary, Mattatiah Calahorra, who had been martyred at Cracow in 1663. Torture was unable to wring any words which could be construed as a confession from him or his companions.

Nevertheless, they were condemned, and most of those who had not succumbed to their sufferings were burned at the stake. The case was subsequently reviewed by a judicial commission, which reversed the earlier findings; with the result that in 1740, after four years of agony, the survivors were at last released.

Henceforth, conditions became worse year by year. There was a peculiarly distressing case in 1747 in Zaslaw, a town in Volhynia, which led to the execution of five persons by excruciating torture. In Markowa Molica (near Zhytomir) in 1753, the 'victim' was a three-year-old boy named Simon Studzinski, who was found dead. Though no evidence could be discovered as to the authorship of the crime, the Bishop of Kiev (in whose diocese the village lay) ordered proceedings to be taken against the Jews, thirteen of whom were thrown into prison and submitted to torture. Though even under these circumstances they continued to assert their innocence, all were condemned and put to death by quartering.[2] Other cases occurred at frequent intervals—at

[1] The work continues to enjoy a certain vogue even at the present time.

[2] A painting which purports to represent the 'martyrdom' of this youth at the hands of bearded Jews, wrapped in their traditional praying garb, was placed in the Carthusian monastery at Kalwarya near Cracow. It is still visited there by thousands of overwrought pilgrims, notwithstanding the fact that the highest authority in the Catholic Church characterised the charge as a figment of prejudice. (See J. Bloch: *Israel and the Nations*, Vienna, 1927, pp. 541-2).

Duniagrod (1748), Pavalochi (1753), Yampol (1756) and many other places. A veritable reign of terror had set in for Polish Jewry. It was impossible to tell where the blow would fall next. On any occasion when a Christian child disappeared, or a Christian ne'er-do-well was found dead, a whole community might be terrorized, and a score of persons who had committed no crime other than that of being Jews might be brought to a shameful and agonizing end.

Under these circumstances, in 1758, the Jewish communities of Poland determined to take steps to defend themselves. A certain Jacob Selig (Selek) was despatched by them to Rome, the centre of the Catholic faith, in order to solicit protection. The Memorial which he submitted to the Holy See gave a moving account of the miserable position of his co-religionists: how as soon as a dead body was found anywhere, the Jews of the neighbouring localities were brought before the courts on a charge of Ritual Murder, and how this mock trial invariably led to conviction, followed by wholesale executions.

Selig's application was referred by the ruling Pope, Benedict XIV. (1746-1758), to the Holy Office of the Inquisition—the competent body for dealing with matters of faith, as well as for supervising Jewish affairs. This body, as was its usual practice in such cases, requested one of its "Consultors", or experts, to go into the question, and formulate an opinion on its behalf.

The person designated was Lorenzo Ganganelli. He was a Franciscan of vast learning and high reputation, the son of a physician of S. Arcangelo (near Rimini), where he had been born in 1705. As Regent of the College of S. Bonaventura in Rome, he had attracted the attention of the Pontiff, who had raised him to his present office. The future for which he was destined was yet more brilliant, and endows this episode with unusual significance.

Before arriving at any conclusion, Ganganelli suggested that the Papal Nuncio in Poland, Visconti, should be instructed to obtain detailed reports on the recent happenings from the local ecclesiastical dignitaries. When the requisite information arrived, he set to work, and in due course produced one of the most remarkable, broad-minded, and humane documents in the history of the Catholic Church—a document which will always cause his memory to be cherished in gratitude and affection by the Jewish people.

IV

THE Memorandum did not confine itself to the discussion of the conditions and events in Poland. As his motto, the author took a telling phrase from Theodoret's *Church History*: *'Not only those who accuse should be believed'*. In accordance with this principle, he dealt exhaustively, in a highly objective spirit, with the question at issue. The Blood Libel was examined in relation both to its general principles and to the actual cases which had been brought up in recent years outside Poland, as well as in that country. In every instance, Ganganelli shows, these had been founded, not upon fact, but upon prejudice. Enlightened governments, such as that of Venice, had consistently condemned the Libel, and taken every opportunity to suppress it. The Holy See had never countenanced it. No reputable authority could be adduced in support of it. Where an impartial trial had taken place (as at Verona, in 1603—the most recent Italian precedent), it had invariably resulted in acquittal.

Ganganelli's conclusion, accordingly (like the conclusion of all others who have examined the question fairly), was that the calumny of Ritual Murder lacks all basis in fact. The Papal pronouncements of the Middle Ages (that of Pope Innocent IV. of 1247 is quoted at length) had been based upon careful consideration and sound judgment. Two cases of child-martyrdom at Jewish hands, and two only, had been recognized by the Catholic Church by official beatification—those of Andreas of Rinn (1462) and Simon of Trent (1475). Even in these instances, Ganganelli pungently noted, the Popes hesitated before conceding the requisite honours—110 years in one case, nearly 300 years in the other. In such reluctantly-conceded exceptions, the fact that murder is established does not necessarily furnish evidence as to the purpose of such murder: and there is no proof that ritual objects were in view. Moreover (the lesson is one which has not been sufficiently learned even at the present time), a people or a family should not be penalized because of a misdeed committed by one of its members.

Perhaps it might be true that the Jews in Poland acted in a suspicious way when they were confronted with a corpse which they were alleged to have done to death. In an atmosphere impregnated with hatred, and under circumstances which rendered impartial enquiry impossible, any trial was certain to be farcical, and could not fail to result in wholesale massacre and spoliation. Linder conditions such as these, no man could be expected to behave rationally and normally, when he saw the storm about to break over his head. The laws of evidence when a Jew was concerned should be the same as those for the Christian.

Another point not without its wider application was Ganganelli's refusal to place credence in the testimony of converted Jews against their former co-religionists. 'In these neophytes from Judaism', he mildly pointed out, 'there is wont to occur a certain transport against their own nation, by reason of which they not seldom go beyond the limits of truth'. He refused, therefore, to admit, in so weighty a matter, the testimony of certain venomous apostates, which could easily be counter-balanced by more plausible evidence from pious Christians of similar origin and unimpeachable character. The Memorandum concludes with a reminder to Christians that, in the days of persecution, they were themselves accused of an identical crime by pagan writers a point which Menasseh ben Israel appears to have made for the first time.[1] More recently, during the invasion of Germany by the Protestant soldiery of Sweden, the Jesuits of Paderborn had to face a similar charge. One seems to hear almost an anti-

1 It has been pointed out that the defence of Christians against the pagan slanders, as found in Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Origen, Minucius Felix, and Eusebius, is almost identical with the utterances of Jewish scholars against Christian slanders of the same nature. Thus the Christian martyr, Biblies, when she recovered her senses after torture, called out "How is it possible that we eat children, if we are not even allowed to eat animal blood?" (Eusebius: *Ecclesiastical History,* Book v., § ii. Cf. also Tertullian, apol: ix).

In a later age, Ganganelli would no doubt have adduced the charge of Child Murder levelled in the nineteenth century against the Catholic missionaries in China, Christian residents in Japan, and even the monks of Mount Sinai. It will be recalled how the English rural population seriously believed that Prince Rupert's cavaliers were accustomed to kill and eat small children: while the early Quakers were charged with the ritual murder of women. It almost seems as though an accusation of this sort is a necessary psychological expression of the dislike of a religious minority.

cipation of Renan's aphorism: 'It is remarkable how uninventive is human malignity'.

In Ganganelli's judgment, then, all the alleged cases of Ritual Murder which had taken place during recent years in Poland—as elsewhere—were devoid of basis in fact, and the sentences pronounced by the Courts were revolting miscarriages of justice. Furthermore, credence in the allegation was contrary the express injunction of a former Supreme Pontiff. He appealed accordingly to the Holy See to take steps to safeguard Polish Jews, in the same unstinting manner as the Popes of the Middle Ages had come to the rescue of the Jews of Germany. Thus only would it be possible to ensure that 'the name of Christ might no longer be held in dishonour amongst the Jews' and that the difficulties in the way of

their conversion—to which, a sincere Christian, he earnestly looked forward—might not be increased.

From the literary point of view, the Report is a miniature masterpiece. It begins by setting forth, blandly and unquestioningly, the premises of the advocates of the opposing case. Their insubstantiality is then demonstrated on internal grounds; and they collapse one after the other. This method has the solitary disadvantage that the author appears to concede, at the outset, the allegations which he afterwards so completely rebuts. The formal scholastic pedantry which makes its appearance from time to time (as in all similar literary productions of the age) does not obscure the robust common sense which infuses the whole. Underlying the document there is a gentle humour: and the demolition of certain arguments brought forward to bolster up the Libel is a model of ecclesiastical sarcasm.

The Memorandum, submitted to the Holy Office towards the close of 1759, was treated with the urgency which it merited. It was taken into immediate consideration and approved. The author himself (who meanwhile, in the previous September, had been raised to the Purple by the new Pope, Clement XIII.) was requested to draw up instructions for the Papal Nuncio at Warsaw, in accordance with the tenor of his conclusions. Not long after, the latter informed the Polish Minister, Count Heinrich von Brühl, that 'the Holy Office, having lately investigated all the foundations of the erroneous belief that the Jews use human blood in the preparation of their unleavened bread, and for that reason are guilty of the slaughter of Christian children,

has come to the conclusion that there is no evidence whatsoever to substantiate this prejudice'. Later in the same year, Frederick Augustus III., penultimate king of Poland, in ratifying the charters of his predecessors, promised the Jews the protection of the law against any accusations of ritual murder which might henceforth arise.[1]

Ten years after, in 1769, on Clement XIII.'s demise, Cardinal Ganganelli was himself elected his successor, as Clement XIV.

[1] Dubnow: *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland,* i. 180: Meisl: *Geschichte der Juden in Polen und Russland,* ii. 54-5: Margolis and Marx: *A History of the Jewish People,* p. 581.

V

GANGANELLI'S Report remained unknown to the outside world (or almost so) for over a century. In 1888, Abraham Berliner, the historian of the Jews in Rome, published a German translation of an Italian original, which he had discovered in the archives of the Roman Jewish community, under the title, *Gutachten Ganganelli's* (*Clemens XIV.*) *in*

Angelegenheit der Blutbeschuldigung der Juden (Berlin, 1888). The Italian text was communicated by Berliner to Isidore Loeb, of Paris, who published it with a learned introduction and notes in the *Revue des Etudes Juives* (Volume xviii. [1889], pp. 179-212). Subsequently, Moritz Stern re-published the document on the basis of another copy discovered by him in the archives of the Jewish community of Mantua, in his *Die Päpstlichen Bullen über die Blutbeschuldigung* (Berlin, 1893).[1]

These writers dealt with the question on the whole in a more or less academic spirit, hardly imagining that the document, important though it was when originally composed, could ever again have a practical bearing. In 1911, however, the notorious Beilis Case began in Russia. Events followed the old, familiar sequence. The dead body of a Christian boy was found at Kiev near a brick-kiln owned by a Jew. The "Black Hundred" immediately raised the cry of ritual murder: Mendel Beilis, the Jewish foreman employed in the kiln, was arrested and put on trial: though, as a matter of fact, it was generally known that the actual culprit was a member of a notorious gang of criminals, with which the dead boy was somehow implicated. For two years the enquiry continued, to the accompaniment of a wild anti-Semitic campaign: the whole Jewish people being, as it were, arraigned in the person of this unfortunate Jewish artisan.

[1] This valuable little work was re-issued in 1899, some copies bearing that date. The name of the Editor does not figure in it. Another transcription of the document from the Rome copy was published by a non-Jewish publicist, G. A. Zaviziano, as one of the appendices to his useful and moving work: *Un raggio di luce: la persecuzione degli ebrei nella storia* (Corfu, 1891).

Among the documents put forward by the defence, in order to prove the utter baselessness of the charge, was the dignified refutation drawn up in his prime by Pope Clement XIV., against whom no breath of suspicion could be brought on the grounds of personal interest. However, one of the Russian experts, whose affidavit was submitted by the prosecution, alleged that he had been unable to find, in any authoritative work of reference, this or any other Papal pronouncement condemning the allegation. He concluded from this fact that the published texts were, in all probability, forgeries.

This assertion could not be passed over in silence. In order to obtain an official pronouncement on the facts of the case, the late Lord Rothschild addressed the following letter to the Vatican:—

New Court,
St. Swithin's Lane, E.C.
7th October, 1913.

To His Eminence RAPHAEL
Cardinal Palatine MERRY DEL VAL
Pontifical Secretary of State,

etc., etc., etc.

My Lord Cardinal,

It is probably not unknown to your Eminence that in the City of Kieff in the Empire of Russia certain evil-disposed persons have recently revived against the Jews the atrocious accusation of Ritual Murder, which has more than once been denounced by the wisdom and catholic solicitude of the Sovereign Pontiffs, and which during the past year has evoked indignant protests from many of the most illustrious men of Western Europe, including members of the Sacred College of which your Eminence is so distinguished an ornament.

This superstitious revival, which is fraught with serious danger to the lives of the large community of Jews inhabiting the Russian Empire, has arisen out of a criminal case in which a Jew stands charged with murder. Whether this Jew is guilty or not is, of course, a question for the Russian tribunals to determine, and it would obviously be improper for me to anticipate or discuss in any way their action in the

matter. But my co-religionists have observed with alarm that efforts are being made on the part of the prosecution to explain the case as one of Ritual Murder, governed by an alleged secret teaching of Judaism, and thus to fasten upon the Jewish religion and the whole Jewish people the responsibility for this hideous crime.

With the evidence it is proposed to submit to the Court on this aspect of the case the defence will have no difficulty in dealing, but there is one affidavit on which the testimony of the Curia Romana will be useful, and is indeed necessary, and it is in order to prevail upon your Eminence to supply that testimony that I now venture to approach you.

The affidavit to which I allude has been sworn by one Justinus Elisejevitch Pranaitis, who describes himself as a Magister of Theology and Roman Catholic Diocesan of the Turkestan Province. It reiterates the familiar arguments by which similar charges of Ritual Murder have been supported in past times, and which have as often been refuted by great theologians and jurists, and perhaps by none more circumstantially than by the illustrious Pontiff, Pope Clement XIV., when as the Reverend Father Ganganelli he was acting as Consultor of the Tribunal of the Holy Office. With these arguments it is unnecessary for me to trouble your Eminence, but in the course of his deposition the said Pranaitis expresses an opinion on a question of fact which directly challenges the testimony of the Holy See.

It will be within the knowledge of your Eminence that many of the Sovereign Pontiffs have on various occasions extended their merciful protection to my persecuted co-religionists, and that at least one of them, His Holiness Pope Innocent IV., issued

an Encyclical or Letter specifically declaring the charge of Ritual Murder, as applied to Judaism, to be a baseless and wicked invention. Other great Pontifical authorities have taken a similar course, notably Giovanni Battista de Marinis, General of the Dominican Order, in 1664, and Cardinal Lorenzo Ganganelli, whose elaborate report on the subject, addressed to the Tribunal of the Holy Office and entitled "Polonia", was drawn up at the instance of His Holiness Pope Benedict XIV. in 1758, and acted upon by his venerable successor, Pope Clement

XIII. Now in the affidavit of the witness Pranaitis there is a reference to these testimonies, and it is stated by the deponent that he has been unable to find them in the usual works of reference. He consequently expresses the opinion that they have no authentic existence and that the published texts are probably forgeries.

It is upon this point that I desire to invoke the gracious intervention of your Eminence. The question is one of authenticating the published texts of the Letter of His Holiness, Pope Innocent IV., and the Report of Cardinal Ganganelli, the originals or official records of which are no doubt in your Eminence's custody. Of the texts, so far as they are known to me, I have the honour to enclose copies herewith.

I do not doubt that following in the enlightened and generous traditions of the Holy See, which has so often raised its voice in defence of the oppressed and in vindication of truth and justice, your Eminence will graciously favour me at an early date with the testimony I require, and which I am empowered to seek of your Eminence by my Jewish co-religionists.

I have the honour to subscribe yourself,
Of your Eminence,
The most humble and obedient servant,
(Signed) ROTHSCHILD.

To this communication the following reply was received:

Segreteria di Stato
di Sua Santità.

18th October, 1913.

My Lord,

In reply to your letter of October 7th I am in a position to certify that the type-written copy of Ganganelli's Report to the Consultors of the Holy Office is substantially authentic. I am able to give you this assurance after inquiries made at the Holy Office where the original document is kept. As to the extract of Innocent IVth's Letter,

there can be no doubt of the accuracy of Raynald's quotation which is confirmed by the fact of Ganganelli citing it in his Report.

Trusting that this declaration may serve your purpose, I have the honour to be, my Lord,

your obedient servant,

(Signed) R. Card. MERRY DEL VAL.

The Right Hon.
Lord Rothschild.

This declaration did not influence the outcome of the trial. Beilis was indeed acquitted, after two years of suffering, a broken man. Yet the verdict was arrived at on circumstantial grounds, and couched in such a manner as to leave the shadow of the Ritual Murder Libel, which could so easily have been repudiated, still overhanging the Jewish people. Nevertheless, the interchange of correspondence between Lord Rothschild and the Vatican had not been superfluous. The statement of the Cardinal Secretary of State finally settled the question of the authenticity of the Report. This is of paramount importance. The document does not, after all, bear the authority of a single individual. Examined and approved by the Supreme Council of the Holy Office on behalf of the Roman Curia, it carries the official authority of the Roman Catholic Church. The personality of the author—subsequently elected Pope—itself endows with more than ordinary significance the document which set the crown upon the constant striving of the Holy See and of the official Catholic Church for justice and humanity. It is the considered verdict, in fact, of a spokesman of Christendom, rectifying an injustice which the Jew has so long suffered in the name of Christianity. It is a privilege, one hundred and sixty years after the death of its illustrious Author, to offer this tribute to his memory.





Letter of Cardinal Merry del Val
(Envelope)

SEGRETERIA DI STATO
DI SUA SANTITA'

18th October 1913

My Lord,

In reply to your letter of October 7th I am in a position to certify that the type-written copy of Ganganelli's Report to the Consultors of the Holy Office is substantially authentic. I am able to give you this assurance after inquiries made at the Holy Office where the orignial document is kept. As to the extract of Innocent IVth's Letter, there can be no doubt of the accuracy of Raynald's quotation which is confirmed by the fact of Ganganelli citing it in his Report.

Trusting that this declaration may serve your purpose, I have the honour to be, my Lord,

your obedient servant

R. Card. Merry del Val

The Right Hon

Lord Rothschild

LETTER OF CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL
(Text)

II

REPORT OF CARDINAL GANGANELLI
[ITALIAN TEXT.]

Non solis accusatoribus credendum.

Da Giacobbe Selek, Ebreo di nazione Polacco, fu presentata l'anno 1758 a Benedetto XIV. di gloriosa memoria una supplica, con cui implorava dalla Pontificia beneficenza un opportuno riparo alle vessazioni, carcerazioni, estorsioni, tormenti e morte, a cui sovente soggiacevano i miseri suoi connazionali sulla supposizione, che da essi venga manipolato il rinomato loro azimo colla mescolanza del sangue umano, e specialmente de' Cristiani: di modo tale, che nel corso di dieci anni, ritrovatosi casualmente qualche cadavere di Cristiano, si è subito supposto l'omicidio, ed in oltre si è tosto creduto commesso dagli Ebrei di quelle vicinanze pel mentovato fine superstizioso.

Cosi accadette in Zaslau, dove era il defonto principe Pauolo Sangasco, Lo stesso avvenne in Sciappatouski, ove risiede il principe Preez, giudice di Creminitz. Lo stesso succedette vicino ad Ostra, ove è il principe Sablonoski; cosi pure in Paulitz, ove era il defonto duca Michele Lubimirski, e finalmente in Jampoli, ove è il duca Casimiri Racczivil, per essersi ritrovato un cadavere imputridito gallegiante nel fiume Oregna. In veduta adunque di una imputazione falsa, che rende la nazione non meno odiosa, che soggetta a tante pene aggravanti nelle sostanze e tolmentose nel corpo, implora la nazioner Ebrea di Polonia qualche provedimento, con cui restasse difesa da une taccia, che la rende obbrobriosa insieme ed ingiustamente punita in aere et corpore.

La riferita supplica per comando della suprema congregazione fu a me commessa, affinchè su di essa umiliassi il mio sentimento. Procurai colle deboli forze mie dimostrare l'insussistenza del reato, che apponevasi ali' Ebrea nazione di Polonia. Nulladimeno, per procedere in una tale materia colle dovute cautele, fui di parere, che prima di prendere su di questo affare alcuna risoluzione, si dovesse scrivere al nunzio Apostolico di Polonia, per rilevarne un' esatta informazione.

Propostasi la supplica col rispettivo voto da me su di essa disteso, si degnarono l'EE. VV. nella congregazione delle Grazie tenutasi li 21 marzo 1758 di approvarlo, decretando 'scribendum esse

Reverendo patri domino nuntio pro informatione, auditis ordinariis locorum, in quibus supponuntur sequi crimina, de quibus agitur'.

Resta ora a considerarsi, quale partito debba da me suggerirsi, dopo che sono giunte dalla

Polonia le informazioni su di questo affare. Per adempire le parti mie, conviene che mi faccia strada a considerare le informazioni prima in genere, indi in specie, finalmente in individuo.

I
RIFLESSIONI SOPRA LE INFORMAZIONI VENUTE DALLA POLONIA, IN GENERE.

In tutte le popolazioni regnano alcune preoccupazioni, che dagli illuminati del secolo chiamansi pregiudizi. Ognuno sa, quanto vi volesse di tempo e di fatica, per disingannare gli Spagnuoli sul punto delle celebri lamie Granatensi. Certamente impiegossi più di un mezzo secolo, prima che il venerabile Innocenzo XI. ne pubblicasse con suo breve Apostolico la condanna.

Ma si tralasci di tessere il carattere poco gradito alle particolari nazioni, massime perchè in alcune di esse ritroveressimo vampiri e pliche, onde risulterebbero evidenti riprove di queste pregiudicate prevenzioni.

Mi restringerò soltanto ad accennare il grave pregiudizio, che si arreca a molti innocenti, qualora questi debbano essere giudicati da chi ritrovasi da simili pregiudizi prevenuto.

La forza della prevenzione seco porta la facilità di persuadersi di tutto ciò che ha coerenza con essa, ed insieme la somma difficoltà di credere l'opposto. Quindi si perde quell' equilibrio, che deve neces- sariamente precedere ad ogni retto giudizio, onde poi l'innocenza rimane qualche volta oppressa. 'Est etiam vitium', lo scrisse S. Bernardo al suo Eugenio nel libro 2 de consideratione, cap. 14, 'facilitar credendi, inde innocentium frequens addictio'. Quindi nasce ancora, che prestandosi senza esame l'assenso a molte relazioni venga ad ammettersi per verità ciò ch'è una mera impostura; sopra di che dovrebbe alla stessa inclita nazione Polacca sovvenire, quanto ad essa accadde l'anno 1254.

Un certo astuto uomo, di nome Martino, spacciossi fondatore fratrum de poenitentia ordinis beatorum martyrum con amplissimi Apostolici privilegi. I vescovi di quel regno e lo stesso Boleslav, detto il Pudico, portati dalla loro innata bontà a promovere il bene,

gli assegnarono il tempio di S. Marco in Cracovia e ricchissimi fondi. E pure il tutto era uno vera impostura, come poi dichiarò alcuni anni dopo Alessandro IV., con sue lettere segnate li 15 maggio 1259, notificando che gli Apostolici indulti spacciati dall' astuto Martino erano falsi. Se la macchina di Martino fu di poca durata, altre affidate al rapporto di alcuni testimoni, passando di voce in voce e da paese in paese, si procacciarono una tal quale perpetuità, onde rendesi poi quasi indelebile la marca di vituperio apposta a qualche nazione o famiglia.

Tre uomini illustri certamente furono Graziano, Pietro Lombardo e Pietro Comestore, e pure furono diffamati come nati d'adulterio e per tali vengono reputati da molti altri scrittori, come riferisce S. Antonino nella 'Somma istorica' parte 3, tit. 18, cap. 6, e specialmente dal Tiraquello nel libro 'De nobilitate' cap. 15, no. 32. Nè mancano altri a' nostri tempi, che vivono con questa opinione succhiata da essi dalla fama. 'An vero famae credat nisi inconsideratus?' come dice Tertulliano nel suo Apologetico al cap. 7. Ed in fatti bisogna essere veramente inconsiderato per immaginarsi, che i tre mentovati illustri uomini siano stati spuri; mentre rintracciandosi la loro origine si rileva, che il Graziano nacque in Chiusi di Toscana, Pietro Lombardo in Novara e Pietro Comestore Trecis in Campania Galliae, e sono note le rispettive distinte madri di ciascheduno di loro.

Zosimo parimente ebbe coraggio d'infamare Costantino il Grande col turpe carattere di spurio, e fu creduta la calunnia da molti altri scrittori e specialmente dal Bodino nel suo 'Metodo istorico' al cap. 7, pag. 302. Da questa calunniosa macchia viene dottamente purgato il gran Costantino da Michele Arpoldo nella sua 'Brittania illustrata' cap. primo, sezione 2, § § 6 e 7. Si replichi dunque con. S. Bernardo, che 'est etiam vitium facilitas credendi; inde innocentium frequens addictio'.

Quindi, per non cadere in questo gran difetto con tanto pregiudizio dei poveri innocenti, li stessi autori gentili ci hanno somministrato prudentissimi suggerimenti. Laonde il famoso Luciano promulgò un libro intitolato 'De non temere credendo calumniae' Seneca poi nel libro 2 'De ira', cap. 19, dà belle ed opportune massime a principi ed a giudici, per togliere dalle loro menti le pregiudicate prevenzioni e la soverchia propensione di credere anzi il male che il bene. Conchiudasi dunque con S. Prospero: 'Ne pateant faciles saevis rumoribus aures'. Imperocchè simili diffamazioni riconoscono sovente la loro origine dall' odio di chi le inventa, e da simile passione di oh' le crede. Che se tutti i Cristiani, specialmente poi i principi

ed i giudici devono guardarsi da questa prevenzione prima di pronunziare la sentenza. Quindi il re Teodorico presso del Cassiodoro nel libro 4, epist. 10, così parla a commune insegnamento: 'Foedum est, inter iura publica privatis odiis licentiam dare, nec ad arbitrium proprium iudicandus est inconsultus fervor animorum. Iniquum quippe nimis est, quod delectat iratum. Furentes iusta non sentiunt, quia, dum commoti animo in vindictam saeviunt, rerum temperantiam non requirunt'. Quando la passione dell' odio è manifesta, non devo immaginarmi, che alcun giudice si lasci sedurre; ma quando l'odio ricuopresi sotto manto di zelo, e zelo di religione, allora vi vuole nel giudice tutta la cautela, per evitare ogni maliziosa sorpresa. Che però Teodoreto nel libro primo della sua 'Storia ecclesiastica' cap. 33, non ritrovò altra maniera di scusare l'imperadore Costantino dalla taccia di ingiusto nell' aver pronunziato sentenza di esilio contro tanti uomini ecclesiastici, illustri ed innocenti, fra' quali vi fu S. Atanasio, se non perchè 'fidem adhibuit episcopis, qui occultare studebant veritatem, illustrem quandam vitae speciem prae se ferentes, qua imperatorem dolo deluserant. Atque ista dico, quo pro imperatore

respondeam ostendamque humanae naturae imbecillitatem et doceam simul: non solis accusatoribus credendum, quamvis digni videantur, quibus sit adhibenda fides, sed alteram aurem integram servandam reo'. Iddio mi guardi dal semplicemente sospettare, che i due vescovi della Polonia abbiano voluto artificiosamente occultare la verità, e che abbiano quà trasmessa una dolosa informazione. Può però darsi, che non ingannatori siano essi stati, ma bensi ingannati, ed in questo non occorre maravigliarsene, come parlando col suo Pietro disse in un caso simile il gran pontefice S. Gregorio nel libro primo de suoi dialoghi, al cap. 4: 'Quid miraris, Petre, quia fallimur, qui homines sumus'? Mi sembra essere opportuno il tenore, con cui Pietro Cellense in certe circostanze regolavasi. Scrive egli adunque nell' epistola 9 del libro 6: 'Neque subitaneus, neque repentinus soleo res magnas disponere, sed cum multa maturi consilii deliberatione . . . Inde est, quod non statim credo omni spiritui propter illum, qui transfigurat se in angelum lucis et sub pallio consultationis affert saepe venenum deceptionis. Vitium autem est omnibus credere et nulli'.

Questi sentimenti vengono riputati non meno utili per il prudente regolamento di un principe, che necessari per il giusto procedere di un giudice. Quindi è nota ad ognuno la legge 'de uno quoque', § de re judicata, sopra di cui hanno dottamente scritto Ippolito de Marsiliis: singul. 75, Alessandro de Imola: Cons. 107, vol 3, Misìngerio: observatio 6, cent. 6 e specialmente il Gigas: parte 3,

questione 6 e 10, dove trattando di atrocissimo delitto, quale si è il crimen laesae maiestatis, dimostra non doversi procedere alla condanna sul fondamento solo delle accuse, se prima non siasi inteso il supposto reo et non siangli assegnate le difese.

Colla scorta di questi principi mi persuado di avere sufficientemente esposto, quanto basta per dimostrare, quale essere debba il nostro contegno circa le informazioni venute dalla Polonia, considerate precisamente in genere, non pretendendo altro se non che resti per ora sospeso il giudizio, fin tanto che non siasi fatto l'esame delle medesime in specie, e finalmente in individuo, e ciò per potere con indifferente equilibrio venir poscia al giudizio di questa causa, giusta l'avviso del savio Greco Focillide: 'Nec visi librata dirimat sententia litem, parte quid ex utraque queat examine causa'. E con ragione, mentre è proprio carattere del giudice il conoscere, siccomme è dote del principe il comandare, come disse Medea presso del tragico: 'Si iudicas, cognosce; si regnas, iube', act. 2 vers. 194.

II
RIFLESSIONI SOPRA LE SUDDETTE INFORMAZIONI, IN SPECIE.

Ella è cosa ben doverosa, che io mi adoperi con ogni diligenza per far conoscere, quanto siano credibili le informazioni venute da Polonia, soltanto che si riguardino 'in specie'. Queste informazioni adunque rimirate in specie contengono la crudeltà degli Ebrei contro

de' Cristiani. Questo solo oggetto, circa cui essi si aggirano, le rende subito verisimili e forse anche realmente vere e da credersi.

Primieramente ognuno sa, di qual zelo s'investisse il monaco Radolfo in Magonza, per reprimere l'audacia degli Ebrei contro de' Cristiani. Stimò suo proprio dovere Radolfo, di predicare al popolo Cristiano ed eccitarlo al giusto risentimento contro degli Ebrei sitibondi del sangue Cristiano. In fatti i Cristiani di Magonza, avvalorati dal zelo di questo monaco, si allarmarono e fecero empia strage degli Ebrei.

Abbiamo ancora dal Rainaldo nel secolo XIII i giusti risentimenti de' principi di Alemagna e del re di Francia contro gli stessi Ebrei, sottoposti perciò a pene corporali e pecuniarie, e se ne assegna la specifica cagione la quale è la medesima per cui sono giustamente stati in Polonia, cioè 'quod in ipsa solemnitate (degl' azimi) se corde pueri communicant interfecti . . . ac eis obiiciunt hominis cadaver mortui'.

Abbiamo inoltre, che in Padova nell' anno 1475 furono rigorosamente puniti gli Ebrei appunto per questo atroce delitto 'de puero necato'. In Verona parimenti l'anno 1603 fu instituito il giudizio contro di un Ebreo, ed eccone la cagione: 'infante crudeliter necato . . . ut innocenti sanguine ad pessimos et nefarios usus uteretur, sicut alias factum esse quibusdam . . . historiae monumentis probare conatus est'. Nell'anno 1705, sul ponte di Rialto in Venezia, presso la chiesa dì S. Giacomo, per rimproverare la perfida nazione Giudaica di questo orrendo misfatto, fu alla publica vista esposta una tela, in cui miravansi dipinti 'Judaei necantes puerum, cum aliis formis et inscriptionibus'. Nello stato Pontificio ancora; e precisamente in Viterbo li 13 di giugno 1705, tentarono gli Ebrei di commettere una simile barbarie contro di un fanciullo Cristiano; ed in Ancona nell'anno 1711 furono accusati, di avere disanguato ed ucciso un fanciullo Cristiano.

Se a tanti monumenti di fatto vogliamo aggiungere le testimonianze di celebri scrittori, si rileverà da questi ancora la contestazione dello stesso delitto, imputato agli Ebrei. Leggassi l'opera del padre Luigi Contarino Crucifero, intitolata 'Il vago e dilettevole giardino', stampata in Venezia l'anno 1597, e precisamente nell'aggiunta; ed in essa, alla pagina 80, si vedrà il titolo seguente: 'Le dodici persecuzioni fatte dagli Ebrei contro i Cristiani.' Leggasi ancora, quanto scrisse Giulio Morosini, già rabbino fra gli Ebrei, poscia Cristiano, nella parte 3, cap. 12, pag. 1392, ed ivi vedrassi una lunga funesta serie di esempi, cioè di molti fanciulli Cristiani, dagli Ebrei trucidati.

Noto è al mondo il B. Simoncino da Trento, che dagli Ebrei nell'anno 1475 fu martirizzato. In Praga ancora avvenne un fatto simile, per cui fu decapitata la madre ed il padre arruotato, e se ne legge la storia in lingua Tedesca.

Ora se da tante nazioni, se quasi in ogni tempo e luogo, eziandio dove gli Ebrei sono soggetti ad un severo rigore, se da tanti scrittori con evidenti prove viene ad essi imputato questo delitto, ognuno ben vede, a quanta base di verità resta appoggiata la informazione

venuta su di tale proposito dalla Polonia, massime poi che in Polonia gli Ebrei hanno tanto di possanza, che tengono molti Cristiani al loro comando soggetti, come può vedersi nell' enciclica di Benedetto XIV. di gloriosa memoria 'ad primatem, archiepiscopos, episcopos regni Poloniae', in data dei 14 giugno dell' anno 1751.

Che *'si isti tacebunt, lapides clamabunt'*. In Posnania nella facciata di una chiesa vi sta esposta alla publica vista una pittura, in cui si rappresenta uno de' rabbini della sinagoga, con un coltello in mano in atto di scannare un Cristiano con

altri Ebrei, che tengono bacile in mano, per riscuoterne il sangue, che sgorga.

Ho creduto mio debito l'adunare tutte le addotte notizie, per formare con esse la verisimiglianza e la credibilità delle informazioni in specie, venute sul proposito di cui si tratta dalla Polonia. Ora però non mi si deve negare di far vedere, ciò non ostante, la insussistenza degli addotti monumenti 'ad finem, de quo agitur'.

Il primo monumento prodotto in giustificazione dell' informazione ce Io somministra il monaco Radolfo. Ora vediamo, se il di lui esposto procedere contro gli Ebrei fosse da competenti giudici approvato. Enrico, arcivescovo di Magonza, sotto gli occhi di cui fu fatta la descritta strage degli Ebrei, disapprovò la condotta del monaco Radolfo e ne palesò i suoi sentimenti al glorioso S. Bernardo. Ora sentiamone la risposta, che diede il santo abbate ali' arcivescovo Enrico nella sua lettera 323: 'Homo ille, de quo agitur in literis vestris (parla di frate Radolfo), neque ab homirre, neque pro homine, neque per hominem, sed neque a Deo missus venit. Quod si se monachum aut eremitam iactat et ex eo sibi assumit libertatem vel officium praedicationis, potest scire et debet, quod monechus non habet docentis, sed plangentis officium, quippe cui oppidum carcer esse debet et solitudo paradisus; hic vero, a contrariis, est solitudinem pro carcere, et oppidum habet pro paradiso. . . . Tria sane sunt in eo reprehensione dignissima: usurpatio praedicationis (colla quale commosse il popolo alla strage contro gli Ebrei), contemptus episcoporum (ai quali rincrebbe un tale scempio di quegli infelici), homicidii approbati libertas' (col promovere ed approvare l'esterminio di quei sventurati). Passa indi S. Bernardo ad insinuare la maniera, con cui devono i Cristiani diportarsi cogli Ebrei, e dice: 'Nonne copiosius triumphat ecclesia de Judaeis, per singulos dies vel convincens, vel convertens eos, quam si semel et simul consumeret eos in ore gladii? Numquid incassum constituta est illa universalis oratio ecclesiae, quae offertur pro perfidis Judaeis a solis ortu usque ad occasum, ut Deus et Dominus auferat velamen de cordibus eorum et ad lumen veritatis a suis tenebris eruantur? Nisi enim eos, qui increduli sunt, credituros speraret, superfluum videretur et vanum, orare pro eis. Sed considerat oculo pietatis, quod Dominus habeat respectum gratiae apud eum, qui reddit bona pro malis et dilectionem pro odio. Ubi est ergo illud, quod dictum est: 'Videas, ne occidas eos?' Ubi est: 'Cum plenitudo gentium intraverit, tunc omnis Israel salvus fiet?'

Non si contenne la smoderato zelo di Radolfo nei confini di Magonza. Scorse egli la

Francia ed altre parti della Germania,

eccitando i Cristiani alla strage contro gli Ebrei, per cui meritassi altri acerbi rimproveri dall' abbate dì Chiaravalle, come sì raccoglie dalla di lui lettera 363, scritta 'ad clerum et populum Galliae orientalis,' in cui apertamente rimprovera il fatto di Radolfo: 'Non sunt persequendi Judaei, non sunt trucidandi, sed nec effugandi quidem.' Quindi Benedetto XIV. di gloriosa memoria nella sua enciclica 'ad primatem, archiepiscopos et episcopos Poloniae,' spedita li 19 giugno 1752, la quale incominicia 'A quo primum' si oppone egli pure 'nimio et furenti Radulphi zelo'. Conchiudasi adunque, che dal fatto et dalla condotta del fratre Radolfo non si può dedurre alcuna mancanza degli Ebrei contro de' Cristiani, ma bensì de' Cristiani, sovvertiti da un eremita, contro degli Ebrei.

Passiamo ora alle rappresentanze del re di Francia e de' principi di Alemagna, toccante il delitto degli Ebrei, 'quod in ipsa solemnifate (cioè degli azimi) se corde pueri communicant interfecti . . . ac eis obiiciunt hominis cadaver[1] mortui', ed è apunto quello stesso delitto che viene imputato ad essi da' Polacchi. Per ben decidere sul proposito di questa imputazione, mi voglio prevalere di un Giudice che da niuno potrà mai riputarsi sospetto. Innocenzo IV., Sommo Pontefice, l'anno 1247, fu interpellato dagli Ebrei stessi, straziati in aere et persona in Alemagna ed in Francia, per la imputazione suddetta. Vediamo come il lodato Pontefice in quest'affare si diportasse. Transcriverò pertanto la lettera stessa di Innocenzo IV. riferita dal Rainaldo, la quale potrà servire di scorta, son per dire sicura, pel regolamento che potrà tenersi sul presente affare degli Ebrei di Polonia. Scrive egli adunque *'Archiepìscopis et Episcopis per Alemaniam constitutis'* nella forma seguente:

"Lacrymabilem Judaeorum Alemanniae (*e qui potrebbe giustamente dirsi*—Poloniae) recepimus questionem, quod nonnulli tam ecclesiastici, quam seculares Principes ac alii Nobiles et Potentes vestrarum civitatum ac diocesum, ut eorum bona injuste diripiant et usurpent, adversus ipsos impia consilia cogitantes, et fingentes occasiones varias et diversas, non considerato prudenter, quod quasi in Archivio eorum Christianae fidei testimonia prodierunt, Scriptura divina inter alla mandata Legis dicente, *Non occides*, ac prohibente illos in solemnitate Paschali quidquam morticinum non contingere, falso imponunt eisdem, quod in ipsa solemnitate se corde pueri communicant interfecti, credendo id ipsam Legem praecipere, cum sit Legi contrarium, ac eis malitiose obiiciunt hominis cadaver mortui, si contigerit illud alicubi reperiri." Questo appunto è ciò che si espone nella sup-

[[1] From this point to —*done i prelati* (p. 47, line 3) is omitted in the text published by Stern.]

plica presentata alla S. Sede a nome degli Ebrei di Polonia. Che però se Innocenzo IV. ammise le suppliche degli Ebrei di Germania, e li difese dalla falsa imputazione, incaricandone i prelati ed i potentati Cristiani per la indennità dei medesimi, pare che ogni ragione voglia potersi la S. Sede prendere il pensiero, di difendere gli Ebrei di Polonia da qualunque aggravio loro si addossi per la mentovata falsa imputazione.

Ora recherò il residuo della lettera di Innocenzo IV.: 'Et per hoc et alia quamplurima figmenta saevientes in ipsos, eos super his . . . spoliant contra Deum et iustitiam omnibus bonis suis et inedia, carceribus ac tot molestiis tantisque gravaminibus premunt ipsos, diversis poenarum affligendo generibus et morte turpissima eorum quamplurimos condemnando . . . unde suum exterminium metuentes duxerunt ad Apostolicae sedis prudentiam recurrendum. Nolentes igitur, praefatos Judaeos iniuste vexari . . . mandamus, quatenus eis vos exhibentes favorabiles et benignos, quidquid super praemissis contra eosdem Judaeos per praedictos praelatos, nobiles et potentes inveneritis temere attentatum, in statum debitum legitime revocato, non permittatis ipsos de coetero super his vel similibus ab aliquibus indebite molestari'. Scrisse Innocenzo IV. altra lettera dello stesso tenore in difesa degli Ebrei ai vescovi di Francia, come ivi nota il Rainaldo.

Innocenzo IV. adunque non credette, che dagli Ebrei si fosse commesso quel delitto, che dalla Polonia anche in oggi ad essi imputandosi, sono in quel regno 'diversis poenarum generibus et morte turpissima' straziati ed uccisi. Quindi vieta simili procedure per un delitto, per la di cui prova non vi è neppure la verisimiglìanza, e comanda, che siano reintegrati. So, che i Magdeburgensi nella centuria 13, cap. 15, col solito loro ardimento si sono avanzati a dire, che Innocenzo IV., allettato da un grosso gratuito sborso degli Ebrei, s' inducesse a promulgare a favore de' medesimi le due accennate lettere. Ma per smentire questi impudentissimi calunniatori, basta il rammentarsi, che Gregorio IX. l'anno 1235 fece un' enciclica 'Fidelibus Christianis' e l'anno seguente scrisse a tutti i vescovi della Francia, e l'una e l'altra lettera era in giustificazione degli Ebrei sul punto di questo stesso delitto, che dalla Polonia o da alcuni di quel regno viene ad essi imputato. Rifiettasi ancora alla costituzione del gran Pontefice Innocenzo III. 'Licet perfidia Judaeorum', che si legge nel torno primo delle di lui epistole, epistola 300, pag. 540, ed in essa vedremo, quanti altri Romani Pontefici abbiano pigliata la protezione di questi miserabili. 'Nos ergo (dice ivi Innocenzo), licet in sua velint magis duritia perdurare, quam vaticinia prophetarum et

legis arcana cognoscere atque ad Christianae fidei notitiam pervenire, quia tamen nostrae postulant defensionis auxilium, et Christianae pietatis mansuetudine praedecessorum nostrorum felicis memoriae Calisti, Eugenii, Alexandri, Clementis et Coelestini, Roznanorum Pontificum, vestigiis inhaerentes, ipsorum petitionem admittimus eisque protectionis nostrae clypeum indulgemus'. Quantunque vengono rimproverati gli Ebrei della loro contumacia ed ostinazione, non si legge però mai, che dalla S. Sede siano stati rimproverati del delitto loro imputato in Polonia; anzi da Gregorio IX. e da Innocenzo IV: positivamente giustificati da una tale imputazione, e da Innocenzo III. sull'esempio di tanti

suoi predecessori furono con molta clemenza protetti, il che non sarebbe seguito, se fossero realmente stati rei del supposto atroce delitto.

Facciamo ritorno dalla Francia e dalla Germania in Italia ed approdiamo nei lidi della Serenissima republica di Venezia, dove si pretende provato il delitto, che da alcuni della Polonia si addossa agli infelici Ebrei. Due fatti si adducono, uno in Padova accaduto l'anno 1475, l'altro in Verona nell'anno 1603; e finalmente si richiama alla memoria la pittura esposta sul ponte di Rialto l'anno 1705, dove rimiravansi 'Judaei necantes puerum', e quindi conchiudasi col tragico, che 'Magna non latitant mala', non permettendo il Signore, che una empietà simile degli Ebrei rimanga occulta ed impunita.

Non mi sono poi indotto a credere, che la Serenissima, la quale ha in ogni tempo saputo'consulere patriae, parcere afflictis, fera caede abstinere, tempus atque irae dare' abbia poi voluto o spogliare dei beni, o privare di vita gli Ebrei, per il preteso delitto, di cui si tratta. Infatti esaminando i due addotti casi, uno di Padova e l'altro di Verona, ritrovo tutto l'opposto. Imperocchè nella ducale, spedita li 22 aprile dell'anno 1475 al capitano di Padova, veggo riprovarsi la di lui condotta contro degli Ebrei, e per segno della illuminata loro mente, che non si lascia preoccupare da pregiudizi, apertamente in detta ducale si protestano nella seguente forma: 'Credimus certe, rumorem ipsum de puero necato commentum esse et artem'. Riconobbe pertante la Serenissima republica, che il rumore sparso di un fanciullo Cristiano ucciso dagli Ebrei, era senza fondamento di verità ed un puro artifizio per estorcere denari da quei sventurati. Terminato l'esame di questa imputazione Polonica, potrà, come spero, succedere che ancora dal tribunale di Roma si debba colà rispondere: 'Credimus certe, rumorem de puero necato commentum esse et artem'.

Vengo al caso di Verona e ritrovo ancora in esso un puro amore della verità, quantumque si trattasse di condannare la condotta dei

confratelli Cristiani e di giustificare gli Ebrei, non essendo piccola gloria di chi governa, il non farsi predominare dal sangue, come presso del tragico cantò Teseo: 'Oh nimium potens, quanto parentes sanguinis vinculo tenes natura, quam colimus inviti quoque!' In Verona adunque da un celebre avvocato Cristiano fu difeso un certo Ebreo, detto Giuseppe, dall'accusa, con cui era stato denunziato, che 'infante crudeliter necato, ut sacratissimae morti Nostri Salvatoris illuderet et innocenti sanguine ad pessimos et nefarios usus uteretur, sicut alias factum esse quibusdam circumforaneae historae monumentis probare conatus est ipse accusator'. Fu pertanto il detto Ebreo Giuseppe dall'avvocato Cristiano difeso dalla suddetta imputazione (che era la medesima di Polonia) e fu dichiarato innocente e come tale rilasciato. Stimo però necessario, di letteralmente riportare la sentenza assolutoria, pronunciata li 28 febbraio 1603. 'Dictus Josephus per excellentissimum eius advocatum, nedum suas satis legitimas defensiones deduxit, verum etiam demonstravit variis allegatis sacrae bibliae locis, hebraicum ritum a sanguinis effusione abhorrere, significando etiam, quod varii principes hanc huiusce

sanguinis usus famam pro vana et falsa habuerunt publicis datis privilegiis: nempe Bona et Joannes Galleatius Sforza duces Mediolani, ut constat sub die 19. Maii 1479; Petrus Mocenigo, dux Venetiarum, sub die 22. Aprilis 1475 et denique Fredericus III., Carolus V. et Maximilianus II. sub die 8. Martii 1566, in quibus affirmatur, olim a Summis Pontificibus prohibitum fuisse, quidquam credere de huiusmodi obiecto impio sanguinis Christiani abusu; ex quibus omnibus tollitur omnis suspicio tam facinorosi sceleris obiecti. Et propterea Illmus Dominus Potestas (ed era Giustiniano Contareno) una cum Excmo consulatu antedictum Josephum relaxavit'. Da questa sentenza di Verona nel fatto dell'Ebreo Giuseppe si riconosce il retto giudizio dei consiglieri e la saviezza del Podestà, imperocchè considerarono essi la inverosimiglianza di questo delitto per rapporto agli Ebrei, i quali per ragione del loro rito a sanguinis effusione abhorrent. Considerarono ancora, che molti Cristiani principi 'hanc huiusce sanguinis usus famam pro vana, nulla et falsa habuerunt'. Considerarono da Sommi Pontefici 'prohibitum fuisse, credere de huiusmodi obiecto impio sanguinis Christiani abusu'. Da tutte queste ragionevolissime considerazioni quel savio magistrato giustamente si persuase, che svanisse 'omnis suspicio tam facinorosi sceleris obiecti'; che però, quantunque l'accusatore si fosse sforzato a provare contro l'Ebreo Giuseppe questo stesso delitto dagli esempi 'sicut alias factum esse quibusdam circumforaneae historiae monumentis probare conatus est ipse accusator', nulladimeno quel savio magis-

trato non lo credette nè vero nè verisimile, anzi levò ogni ombra di sospetto. Piacesse al Signore, che lo sventurato Jacob Selek avesse dovuto presentarsi ai tribunali di Padova o di Verona più tosto che a quelli di Polonia, poichè avrebbe sottratta la sua nazione dagli strazi, da gravosi tributi e da supplizi.

Portiamoci ora in Venezia e vediamo, come la Serenissima republica diportossi, allorchè intese essersi esposta sul ponte di Rialto una gran tela, in cui vederansi dipinti 'Judaei necantes puerum, cum aliis formis et inscriptionibus'. Ecco pertanto il decreto, emanato li 8 aprile dell' anno 1705: 'Mandavít eamdem picturam integre omnino deleri et depennari.' Volesse Iddio, che simili sentimenti di chiara cognizione penetrassero ancora in Polonia, mentre non si vedrebbe in Posnania quella pittura, di cui discorrerò a suo tempo.

Un simile esito ebbero le altre due accuse, date contro gli Ebrei si in Viterbo, che in Ancona, mentre nulla si rilevò contro degli infelici, come si può riconoscere dagli atti, che furono in tali occorrenze fabbricati.

Dai fatti già disegnati passare io debbo alli scrittori, fra de' quali il primo è il padre Luigi Contarini Crucifero, autore dell' opera intitolata 'Il vago è dilettevole giardino', il quale nell'aggiunta riferisce le dodici persecuzioni, fatte da Ebrei contro i Cristiani. Fermiamoci alcun poco sopra il descritto titolo dell' opera di questo buon padre. Egli chiama un'vago e dilettevole giardino' quest' opera, in cui descrivendo le dodici persecuzioni non si vede in conseguenza altro che un funesto e tragico spettacolo di sangue innocente, sparso da barbari. Se i fatti, da esso lui narrati, corrispondono alla verità, come la materia

di cui tratta corrisponde al titolo dell' opera, non abbiamo, a mio credere, alcuna base, su cui affidare le Poloniche accuse contro gli Ebrei, se pure non vogliamo scusare il buon padre, sul riflesso che ancora in Roma s' intitola spedale della consolazione, quel luogo in cui ricevansi i feriti, che sogliono per motivo dell'acerbo dolore strillare. Egli dedica questo suo 'vago e dilettevole giardino', inaffiato dal sangue innocente, al padre Lauro Badoaro, 'suo nipote carissimo'. Egli nella dedicatoria chiama questo suo nipote carissimo: 'un vero e mirabile ritratto dell' eloquenza divina dei gran padri della chiesa crocifera'. Questo titolo di chiesa crucifera sarebbe rincresciuto a S. Agostino, siccome gli rincrebbe il titolo di chiesa meridiana, che si arrogavano i Donatisti. Che se è vero il proverbio, scolpito nella torre prossima alle tre cannelle: 'Ex ungue leonem', potremo a quest' ora prognosticare il peso di queste dodici persecuzioni, fatte da Ebrei contro i Cristiani. In fatti, sentiamone da questo padre della chiesa crucifera la enumerazione. La prima perse-

cuzione adunque, fatta dagli Ebrei contro de' Cristiani, la stabilisce sotto di Erode, quando'a bimatu et infra occidit multos pueros'. Di due cose ci dovrebbe assicurare questo scrittore: la prima, che Erode fosse realmente Ebreo, e l'altra, che quei faniciulli fossero Cristiani. Per la prima parte, fuori dello Scaligero e di Casaubuono, non ritroverà il padre Crucifero chi lo creda, mentre Giuseppe Ebreo nel libro 14 delle Antichità: cap. 11, Eusebio nel libro primo della storia ecclesiastica: cap. 6, Origene nell' omilia 17 in Genesim, S. Epifanio nell' eresia 20, S. Ambrogio, libro 3 in Lucam, S. Girolamo nel commentario al cap. 3 di Osea, S. Agostino nel lib. 18 de civitate Dei: cap. 45, ed altri padri e scrittori non credono, che Erode fosse altrimenti Ebreo ma 'alienigena'. Quindi Natale Alessandro nel tomo 2, dissert. g, stabilisce la seguente proposizione: 'Herodes Idumaeus fuít et alienigena respectu Judaeorum'. L'altra parte poi, cioè che gl' innocenti fossero Cristiani, basta di sapersi, che il battesimo fu instituito da Gesù Cristo l'anno trigesimo dell' età sua, e quando accadde la strage degli Innocenti, il nostro Redentore contava poche mesi dalla sua nascita 'ex immaculato virginis utero'. Sicchè questa prima persecuzione degli Ebrei contro de' Cristiani si può giustamente cancellare dal numero di queste dodici persecuzioni.

Molto meno in tal numero possono annoverarsi le altre undici, e per rimanerne persuasi, basta solo, che riflettiamo al titolo delle medesime. Quindi il padre Crucifero pone: la seconda persecuzione sotto Nerone imperadore, la terza persecuzione sotto Domiziano imperadore, la quarta persecuzione sotto Nerva e Traiano imperadore, la quinta persecuzione sotto Adriano imperadore, la sesta persecuzione sotto Antonino Vero e Comodo, la settima persecuzione sotto Severo imperadore, la ottava persecuzione sotto Massimino imperadore, la nona persecuzione sotto Decio imperadore, la decima persecuzione sotto Gallo Ostigliano e Valentino e Valenziano imperadori e Valeriano, la undecima persecuzione sotto Aureliano imperadore, la dodecima persecuzione sotto il crudelissimo Diocleziano imperadore e Massiminiano. Questo è il computo delle Ebraiche persecuzioni, numerate dal padre Crucifero, il quale ne deduce la seguente somma: 'Il fine delle dodici persecuzioni, fatte da Ebrei'. Tralascio di considerare tante cose quivi narrate,

le quali sbilanciano dal vero. Mi sia solamente permesso, di chiedere a questo padre Crucifero, se Nerone, Domiziano, Nerva, Traiano, Adriano e tanti altri imperadori, da esso lui nominati, erano veramente Ebrei, e chi li avesse circoncisi. Si ricorda pertanto questo scrittore, ciò che disse il tragico in Troade: 'Maiora veris monstra vix capiunt fidem—rumores vacui verbaque inania—et par sollecito fabula somnio'. E veramente deve

compatirsi il padre Contarino, perchè fabbricò egli questo suo vago e dilettevole giardino colle piante, pigliate da Pietro Messia, che fu un piantator di carote, siccome è noto agli eruditi ed agli amatori della verità.

Si passi ora a Giulio Morosini, prima Ebreo e poi Cristiano, prima rabbino fra suoi, e poi scrittore fra noi. In questi neofiti dall'Ebraismo acccadere suole un certo trasporto contro della propria nazione, per cui non rare volte trapassano i limiti della verità. Quindi io osservo che non solo Giulio Morosini, ma ancora il dottore Pauolo Sebastiano Medici, neofito egli pure dell'Ebraismo, da me conosciuto e trattato, promulgò varie accuse contro degli Ebrei. Gli Ebrei di Roma publicarono colle stampe una piena giustificazione contro delle medesime, ed il Medici non vi potè replicare. Nel fine del secolo passato, dai torchi di Abramo de Verdi, usci alla publica luce un libro intitolato 'Maximi fructus Monitum'. L'anonimo autore fa ivi ad evidenza conoscere, essere una vera impostura, che gli Ebrei vadano in cerca del sangue Cristiano, per farne uso superstizioso e per impastarne il loro pane azimo. Adduce molti testi del vecchio testamento, vari oracoli de' Sommi Pontefici e copiose testimonianze di rinomati scrittori.

Nell'anno 1753, dai torchi di Giovanni Ignazio Heyinger, fu prodotto in Vienna, colle dovute licenze, un libro composto da Luigi de Sonnenfels, professore di quella università, intitolato: 'Judaismus de usu insontis Christiani sanguinis accusatus, inquisitus et absolutus' (in Polonia però si direbbe: et condemnatus). Il sopradetto autore, per essere stato Ebreo, indi col divino aiuto passato alla Cristiana religione fa vedere, quanto ripugna alla nazione Giudaica l'uso del sangue Cristiano. Ciò però che egli dice nel proemio, deve fare molta impressione nell'animo de' Cristiani, e deve muoverli anzi a difendere da questa taccia gli Ebrei, che ad imputargliela. Ecco pertanto le parole del mentovato autore: 'Quemadmodum generali caritatis lege prohibemur nonnulli hominum coetui, cuiuscunque demum superstitionis sit, aliquid falsi vel sinistri affingere, eodem prorsus modo nobis praeceptum est, ut praeconceptas de iis criminationes, utpote praefatae caritati et veritati adversas, omnimodo invalidare et evertere laboremus. Praeterquam enim quod isthaec adversae partì falso inflictae incusationes tam aeternae quam creatae veritati contrarientur, sic et insimul rumpunt sacratum vinculum humanae societatis causantque in animis religione dissidentibus, praeter contemptum et amaritudinem tam noxium odium, ut

tandem de salvifica nostra fide, ne audire quidem sustineant, erronee ratiocinantes eam nonnisi falsitati et odio innixam esse. Experientia id edoctus scribo, utpote qui a nativitate et incunabulis meis sacris Judaeorum addictus, infinita tandem Dei misericordia, cadentibus ex oculis infidelitatis squammis, lucem Evangelii aspexi et pretioso Salvatoris mei sanguine debito aeternae mortis expurgatus sum. Haud enim satis dici potest, quam potenter ignem communis Christianorum odii Judaeorum corde inflamment praefata illa futilia commenta, quorum falso nobis spostulantur. Haec enim praeter alfa huiusque impediverunt, quod non maiori numero ad fidem nostram advolaverint'.

Dello stesso sentimento fu Pauolo Burgense, già dottore Ebreo, e poscia cattolico ed assunto in vescovo di Burgos, il quale sopra il primo capo del sacro Genesi scrive così: 'Quapropter attribuere istum errorem Hebraeis, non est utile ad eorum reductionem. Credunt enim, quod nos fingimus mendacia contra eos, quod non modicum impedimentum praestat ad hoc, ut reddamur eis credibiles'.

In questo punto adunque non vi vuole fanatismo, come si scorge, ed in Pauolo Sebastiano Medici, ed in Giulio Morosini. Ma se vogliamo prestar fede ai neofiti, abbiamo il celebre Lirano del mio ordine, abbiamo il famoso Leone da Modena, abbiamo Pauolo Burgense, Luigi Sonnenfels ed altri molti, come può vedersi nella biblioteca rabbinica, stampata dall' Ugolini, presso dei quali non leggesi una tale imputazione fatta agli Ebrei, anzi vi si vede da essi 'puro veritatis amore' valorosamente impugnata. Giulio Morosini pertanto doveva seguire la traccia ed il sentimento di tanti altri celebri scrittori, convertiti dall'Ebraismo alla Cristiana fede, e doveva rammentarsi che 'principes hanc huiusce sanguinis usus famam pro vana et falsa habuerunt', e che da tanti altri monumenti 'tollitur omnis suspicio tam facinorosi sceleris obiecti', come si legge nella sentenza pronunziata li 28 febbraio dell'anno 1603 dal podestà di Verona a favore dell'Ebreo Giuseppe, che era stato di tale scelleratezza falsamente accusato, come a suo luogo ho dimostrato.

Tralasciate simili larve che nascono talora dall' odio e spesse volte dalle pregiudicate prevenzioni, delle quali ho dato qualche saggio nel primo capo, in cui si è parlato delle preoccupazioni e degli aggravi che ne derivano agli innocenti! Devo fare passaggio alla considerazione dei fatti veri e reali. Ammetto dunque per vero il fatto del B. Simone, fanciullo di tre anni, ucciso dagli Ebrei in odio della fede di Gesù Cristo in Trento l'anno 1475, quantunque venga ciò contrastato dal Basnagio e dal Vagenseilio; poíchè il celebre Flaminio Cornaro, Veneto senatore, nella sua opera 'De cultu S. Simonis,

pueri Tridentini' dilegua tutte le dubbiezze, promosse da' mentovatì oppositori. Deve però osservarsi; che Sisto IV. (luminoso pianeta della mia religione) nel di cui Pontificato avenne questo tragico successo in Trento, promulgò un apostolico Breve, in cui vietò il culto che al suddetto B. Simone da suoi concittadini prestavasi. Anzi giunse tant' oltre l'affare, che nel corso quasi di un secolo restò questo culto inibito, sin tanto, che il gran

Pontefice Sisto V. (l'altro luminoso pianeta della mia serafica religione) l'anno 1588 con apostolico suo Breve concedette l'officio e la messa propria in onore del B. Simone per la città e diocesi di Trento; coli' aggiungervi l'indulgenza plenaria a chi confessati e communicati avessero nella di lui festa visitata la chiesa, in cui ritrovansi le di lui reliquie. Il Breve dì Sisto IV. viene riferito nell' opera immortale 'De canonizatione sanctorum' di Benedetto XIV. di gloriosa memoria: libro primo, cap. 14, num. 4; il Breve susseguente di Sisto V. viene riferito nella 'Dissertazione apologetica sopra il martirio del B. Simone,' stampata in Trento l'anno 1747 dal padre Benedetto da Cavalesio, alla pag. 207.

Ammetto eziandio per vero un altro fatto, accaduto l'anno 1462 nel villaggio Rinnense, diocesi di Bressanone, nella persona del B. Andrea, fanciullo barbaramente trucidato dagli Ebrei in odio della fede di Gesù Cristo. Osservo però, che dall'anno 1462 sino alli 15 Decembre 1753 ha dovuto la diocesi di Bressanone pazientare per avere dalla S. Sede la concessione dell'officio e della messa, e sotto li 14 gennaro 1754 fu conceduta l'indulgenza plenaria a chi nel giorno 12 di luglio visitasse la chiesa Rinnense, in cui riposano le reliquie del suddetto B. Andrea. Laonde la diocesi di Bressanone quasi per tre secoli ha dovuto pazientare, prima che il culto del fanciullo B. Andrea venga dalla santa Romana chiesa permesso. Finalmente su questi due fatti, e di Bressanone e di Trento, osservare dobbiamo ciò che dottamente insegnò la gloriosa memoria di Benedetto XIV. in una sua lettera in data di 22 febbraio 1755 a monsignore Benedetto Veterani, in cui al § 29, pag. 50, prescrive, che per aversi fondate prove di simili infanticidi imputati agli Ebrei, devono questi 'essere stati clamorosi, noti al popolo, maledetti da tutti e vendicati dai magistrati'. Quindi sebbene dai Bollandisti, sotto il giorno 24 marzo, si faccia menzione di un certo Joannetto, fanciullo ucciso dagli Ebrei in odio della fede nella diocesi di Colonia; sebbene il Bailet, sotto lo stesso giorno 24 marzo, faccia memoria di un certo Guglielmo, trucidato dagli Ebrei in odio della fede in Inghilterra; sebbene il Teofilo Reinaudo nell'opera intitolata 'De martyrio per pestem', parte 2, cap. 2, num. 7, faccia menzione di un altro

fanciullo, ucciso parimente dagli Ebrei in un castello chiamato Guardia; sebbene il padre Benedetto da Cavalesio, alla pag. 246 della mentovata sua dissertazione, faccia menzione di Lorenzino, fanciullo svenato dagli Ebrei l'anno 1485 in Marostica, territorio di Vicenza, ed in comprova di questo fatto, alla pag. 253, Si produca un attestato della curia vescovile di Padova, e dagli accennati autori si dica, che i mentovati fanciulli siano riconosciuti nei rispettivi luoghi per beati; pure la gloriosa memoria di Benedetto XIV., nella mentovata lettera, alla pag. 34, parlando dei suddetti, saggiamente soggiunge: 'Non si può dire che siano beatificati dalla S. Sede . . . . ne essendosi formato alcun processo, o trasmesso a Roma al Romano Pontefice, acciò lo approvasse, e molto meno sì possono dire canonizati'. Del fatto accaduto in Praga non può farsi gran conto, o perchè mancano monumenti autentici, o perchè l'infanticidio fu commesso dal proprio padre in odio del battesimo che furtivamente era stato conferito al di lui figlio. Ammirossi per altro un trionfo della grazia divina, perchè dopo varie carnificine, alle quali fu dal magistrato sottoposto il padre, pochi momenti prima di spirare sotto i tormenti la vita, chiedette il

moribondo padre il santo battesimo, protestandosi di avere di buon grado sofferti tutti i tormenti in penitenza dell'eccesso da lui commesso nella uccisione del proprio innocente fanciullo.

Concludesi adunque, che di tanti infanticidi, imputati da scrittori agli Ebrei in odio della nostra santa fede, due soli possono dirsi veri, perchè questi due soli possono dirsi con autentiche prove dopo tante diligenze e dopo il corso di molto tempo provati. Quando poi discenderò a considerare le informazioni di Polonia in individuo, farò a chiaro lume vedere, quanto scarse, dubbie ed incerte prove si adducono delle pretese imputazioni, anzi dubito che si potrà ragionevolmente sospettare, che il tutto sia un impostura de' Cristiani contro gli Ebrei.

Non credo però, che dall'ammettere per veri i due fatti di Bressanone e di Trento, si possa con fondamento dedurre, che questa sia una massima non meno teorica che pratica dell' Ebrea nazione; imperocchè per istabilire un assioma certo e comune, non bastano due soli successi. Che però, siccome per qualche delitto commesso da un particolare non rimane priva la di lui parentela dell'onorificenza e degli avanzamenti a gradi e dignità più eminenti, come vediamo a' nostri giorni avvenire in tante famiglie, quantunque in qualche tempo sia stato il loro splendore da qualche nube di nero fatto ecclissato, cosi dobbiamo nel caso nostro conchiudere, se non vogliamo prendere abbaglio. Tale certamente deve essere il nostro contegno, non solo in riguardo alla sentenza di Verona già riferita,

ma molto più riguardo alla dottrina di S. Bernardo, addotta contro frate Radolfo, e finalmente in riguardo ai sentimenti di Gregorio IX. ed Innocenzo IV., i quali, come ho dimostrato, escludono questa perniciosa massima alla nazione Ebraica. Nè mi si opponga, che l'impegno di sottrarre gli Ebrei di Polonia da questa taccia, mi fa appigliare a ragioni assai deboli ed insussistenti, perchè posso dimostrare, che S. Agostino, per difendere i cattolici dell'Africa dall'uccisione de' vescovi Donato e Marcolo, si prevale della stessa ragione. Egli adunque, nel lib. 2, cap. 21, contro di Petiliano Donatista alla suddetta accusa così risponde: 'Quapropter de omnibus talibus invidiosis criminibus hoc vobis frumentum Christi (cioè la chiesa cattolica dispersa per tutto il mondo) libera et secura voce respondet: Si non probatis quod dicitis, ad neminem pertinet; si autem probatis, ad me non pertinet'—sicchè ai due fatti del B. Simone e del B. Andrea che suppongonsi provati può giustamente rispondere la nazione Ebraica dimorante in Polonia: 'Si autem probatis, ad nos non pertinet'. Tanto e vero, che un delitto commesso da uno di una famiglia o di una nazione, non può nè deve imputarsi nè agli altri parenti, nè agli altri concittadini.

La pittura poi di Posnania potrà avere tanta base di verità, quanta ne hanno le iscrizioni dei due cavalli che danno il nome al Quirinale, cioè 'opus Phidiae et Praxithelis', essendo noto agli eruditi, quale anacronismo contengasi in dette iscrizioni. Io mi figuro, che questa pittura meriterebbe di essere trattata, come fu trattata l'altra, che nell' anno 1705 fu esposta sul ponte di Rialto, sopra di cui la Serenissima republica 'mandavit eandem picturam

integre omnino deleri et depennari'. Tertulliano racconta nel suo Apologetico, cap. 16, che nella piazza di Cartagine fu esposta alla publica veduta una pittura colla seguente iscrizione: 'Deus Christianorum onochoites'. Vedevasi in detta pittura espresso un mostro'auribus asininis, altero pede ungulatum et togatum' colla suddetta iscrizione. Riferisce poi il mentovato Tertulliano ad un tal spettacolo 'risisse Christianos et nomen et formam'. Se i Christian ridessero in Cartagine alla veduta della sopradetta pittura, io m'imagino che gli Ebrei di Polonia, nel vedere la pittura di Posnania, abbiano tuttora motivo di ridere.

Nel secolo in cui viviamo, in una capitale della nostra Italia, un pittore assai celebre diede motivo di ridere col seguente fatto. Aveva egli dipinto in tela il ritratto di una persona assai riguardevole, cui dispiacendo il prezzo, ricercato dal pittore, non volle più il ritratto, dicendo che non gli rassomigliava. Ora perchè 'pictoribus atque poetis quodlibet audendi semper fuit aequa potestas' il mentovato

pittore; per risentirsi del rifiuto, espose al publico quel medesimo ritratto, ma colla divisa in capo che devono portare gli Ebrei. Fu tale e tanto il risentimento del personaggio che il pittore dovette giustificarsene avanti il principe, presso cui era stato accusato. Il pittore adunque in proprio scarico disse così: 'Non avrei mai creduto, che un ritratto, non creduto somigliante all'originale in aria di Cristiano, venisse riconosciuto per somigliante e proprio colla divisa da Ebreo'. Con questa lepida risposta placò il pittore lo sdegno del principe. Ora io mi figuro, e non senza fondamento, che dalla voce popolare sia stata la pittura di Posnania spacciata come rappresentante gli Ebrei in atto di uccidere un Cristiano, quando in realtà non vi è ragione con cui provare nè la teorica nè la practica di simile eccesso negli Ebrei, come dichiararono i Sommi Pontefici Gregorio IX. ed Innocenzo IV. Infatti una pittura, posta sul prospetto di una chiesa, [non] deve avere ogni altro significato da quello che si pretende; ed allora solamente vì avrebbe luogo, quando esprimesse un martirio, ma non giammai un atto superstizioso, quale si è l'uso del sangue Cristiano, per impastare il pane azimo.

Se poi si dà luogo ad una più fondata e ragionevole congettura, sono di avviso, che la mentovata pittura possa e debba riferirsi a quanto accadde sotto Boleslao III. nel principio del secolo XII. I Pomerani, per divertire Boleslao dall'intrapreso assedio di Bialograd, fecero una furiosa incursione in Polonia, dove commettendo rapine e stragi ricolmarono di orrore quelle contrade. Il santo archivescovo Martino, per sottrarsi dal furore degli invasori, si rifugiò sulla soffitta del duomo. Quindi i Pomerani che ne andavano in traccia, imbattutisi nell'arcidiacono, da essi creduto l'arcivescovo, lo trasportarono in Pomerania con tutti i sacri arredi del tempio. Ma le preghiere del santo arcivescovo mossero il cielo ad una giusta vendetta; mentre i Pomerani, divenuti fra di loro stessi furiosi, si macchiarono col proprio sangue, ed avvenne che i figli incrudelirono contro de' loro padri medesimi collo scannarli e col dissetarsi con quel sangue stesso, da cui erano stati generati. Avvedutisi poscia, che ciò derivava dall' ingiusta sanguinosa strage e da' sacrileghi furti fatti in Polonia, rimandarono l'arcidiacono, le sacre suppellettili, e molti

abbracciarono la fede di Gesù Cristo. Questo fatto può meritare di essere espresso nella fronte del tempio, ed a questo evento dee con ragione riferirsi la pittura di Posnania, e non già all'uso superstizioso del sangue Cristiano per impastarne il pane azimo, come si pretende da' Polacchi contro gli Ebrei.

Che se vogliamo pienamente persuadercene, si può addurre in favore degli Ebrei una negativa coartata. Ognuno sa, che l'ingresso

degli Ebrei in Polonia accadde dopo la di loro espulsione dalle Spagne, mentre prima di un tal tempo non evvi in Polonia alcun vestigio nè memoria alcuna di Ebrei. Ora è certo, che Ferdinando detto il Cattolico, dopo di avere esterminato i Mori, i quali per otto secoli avevano tiranneggiata la Spagna, sotto lì 30 marzo dell'anno 1492 promulgò un editto, con cui intimossi agli Ebrei sotto pena della vita, o di ricevere il santo battesimo, o di doversene partire da tutti i regni dì quella monarchia. Uscirono centosettantamila famiglie, nelle quali, a conto fatto, numeravansi ottocento mila persone, e queste si sparsero per l'Africa, Turchia, Grecia ed Italia. Poniamo che successivamente passassero in Polonia, ciò non potè per altro succedere che nel 1500. Ciò supposto, io non veggo come da una pittura che si suppone più antica del secolo XV., si possa desumere un argomento di fatto contro gli Ebrei, quando gli Ebrei non erano in Polonia, ed in conseguenza non potevano essere ivi autori di un fatto, che meritasse di essere espresso in tela ed esposto sul prospetto del tempio di Posnania. 'Ecco il giudizio uman come spesso erra'.

Tutte queste riflessioni doveva io fare sopra le informazioni in specie venute dalla Polonia, perchè esse sono appoggiate, come ora vedrassi, sulla base di fatti pretesti, già dileguati, e sulle testimonianze degli storici già confutati. Sicchè le suddette informazioni in specie non devono, a mio giudizio, recare nocumento alcuno agli Ebrei.

III
RIFLESSIONI SOPRA LE INFORMAZIONI IN INDIVIDUO

Da monsignor nunzio di Polonia si presero per ordine di questa suprema [tribunale] le informazioni sopra l'esposta supplica di Jacob Selek, Ebreo di nazione Polacca, dai soli vescovi di Luccoria e di Kiovia, che si danno in sommario sotto le lettere A. B. C. Su delle medesime farò, con dovuto rispetto, le necessarie infolmazioni.

Nella informazione pertanto del vescovo did Luccoria, segnata B, si legge, quanto segue: 'Perfida Judaeorum gens, quot quantaque suae hocce in regno (cioè di Polonia) erga sanguinem Christianorum crudelitatis dederit documenta, toto in orbe non ex histori is typo impressis tantum, verum etiam ex actis decretorum, maxime in causis infanticidii, per varia subsellia praelatorum, tum executionibus (questo è ciò che giustamente rincresce) virtute eorundem ex

personis infidelium ab anno 1400 ad hocce usque tempus subsecutis, clarissime intelligere licet' .

Sicchè dal proemio di questa informazione si releva, che nella mente di monsignore vescovo di Luccoria vi sono quelle prevenzioni, delle quali e contro le quali ho ragionato nel cap. I delle riflessioni fatte sopra le informazioni in genere, si rileva, che la suddetta informazione è appoggiata a quei medesimi principi, su de quali erano fabbricate le accuse contro degli Ebrei di Alemagna, di Francia, di Venezia, di Padova, di Verona, di Viterbo e di Ancona. Quindi, se Gregorio IX., se Innocenzo IV., Sommi Pontifici, giudicano insussistenti simili accuse, come ho fatto chiaramente vedere; se negli altri tribunali d'Italia vennero dichiarati innocenti gli Ebrei, io non veggo, come in Polonia debbano imputarsi rei di un tanto eccesso, e che dall'anno 1400 sino al corrente tempo, vale a dire quasi per quattro secoli, abbiano continuato a commetterlo, a costo ancora di tanti loro danni in aere et in corpore sofferti.

Sembra poi anche, che monsignore vescovo di Luccoria siasi dichiarato troppo facile a credere ciò che non può essere. Mentre, come si è osservato, gli Ebrei non entrarono in Polonia se non che dopo il 1500, sicché non essendovi nel 1400 non potevano essi ivi commettere il supposto eccesso. Non è ancora credibile, che appena entrati in Polonia, non già come conquistatori, ma quasi in figura di schiavi, volessero sul bel principio rendersi odiosi più di quello lo erano stati nella Spagna, dove, se avessero commesso un tale delitto, sarebbero stati uccisi e non esiliati, siccome i Mori per comando di Ferdinando furono tutti trucidati, perchè furono trovati rei di omicidi, parte commessi e parte macchinati; ma gli Ebrei che non vollero abbracciare la nostra santa fede, furono dallo stesso Ferdinando semplicemente esiliati. Se adunque nelle Spagne, dove avevano si lungo domicilio ed erano tanto doviziosi gli Ebrei, mai e poi mai incolpati furono di un simile eccesso, come può essere credibile, che appena giunti in Polonia iví subito cominciassero l'epoca degl' infanticidi e degli omicidi?

Bramerei che monsignore vescovo di Luccoria, per suo disinganno, leggesse la decretale d'Innocenzo IV. da me riferita, che trovasi presso del Rainaldo, continuatore del Baronio, ed ivi mirare potrebbe le accuse medesime, colle quali egli aggrava gli Ebrei, ed insieme ritroverebbe la piena discolpa che ne fa il lodato Sommo Pontefice.

Sono ormai cento anni da che gli Ebrei di Polonia furono di simile delitto imputati. Non mancò per altro chi prendesse le loro difese, le quali, affinchè fossero di maggior possanza, da sacri oratori ne'

pulpiti vennero proclamati innocenti. Eccone il monumento. Il padre Rev^{mo} Giovanni

Battista de Marinis, maestro generale de' padri predicatori, commosso a pietà degli Ebrei di Polonia, vessati per questa stessa imputazione, li g febbraio dell'anno 1664, scrisse al padre Alano Chodoruski, provinciale di Polonia, una pressantissima lettera, in cui inculcava a' suoi religiosi di quel regno, che predicassero dal pulpito e persuadessero quei popoli a depone la sinistra opinione, di cui erano invasati contro gli Ebrei, da essi creduti autori dell' eccesso di cui si tratta. 'Pro parte miserorum Hebraeorum, quotquot in regno Poloniae dispersi habitant, suppliciter maesteque nobis exponitur, ipsos ibidem ab imperito vulgo et nonnullis privato livore sibi infensissimis per varias calumnias et irnputationes maligne traduci, et in specie quasi ad ritum sui panis azimi sanguinem Christianorum soleant adhibere. . . Nos igitur, iusta commiseratione tacti, horum serie Paternitati Vestrae committimus, quatenus per se et suos . . . miserrimae genti contra iniustas quaslibet calumnias succurrat. Si quidem Christianae mansuetudinis ac pietatis est, etiam istis, sicuti per iniuriam opprimuntur, viscera humanae charitatis exhibere; peculiariter vero Paternitas Vestra per universam provinciam, nostro suoque nomine, mandet singulis divini verbi praedicatoribus, ut pro concione aliisque datis occasionibus generatim populos adhortentur, ne illicitis odiis, falsis delationibus, probris, contumeliis aut quocumque insultu ac saeviendi libidine calamitosam hanc gentem divexando, Deum nostrum offendant . . . faciteque Hebreos re ipsa experiri, quod ipsorum non desideramus interitum, sed salutem.'

Tali ancora furono i sentimenti di S. Bernardo contro di fratre Radolfo, tali gli oracoli di Gregorio IX., ed Innocenzo IV. contro de' principi d'Alemagna e di Francia, come si è veduto. Faccia adunque il Signore, che qualche raggio di questa verità spunti una volta in. Polonia dove 'illicitis odiis, falsis delationibus, probris, contumeliis, calamitosam hanc gentem divexando, Deum nostrum offendunt', e tanto maggiore deve riputarsi in questo genere la divina offesa, quanto maggior ostacolo si pone alla conversione di questi infelici. Quindi il divino sdegno fu inesorabile contro del sacerdote Heli e della sua famiglia, perchè i di lui figli, colla loro ingordigia, retrahebant homines a sacrificio Domini'. Certamente non vi sarà confessore, più benigno e più indulgente che sia, il quale non comprenda, quanto grave ingiuria facciasi al divino onore, quanto danno si arrechi ad un infedele col dargli motivo di sfuggire la luce evangelica e di rimanere nelle tenebre dell' infedeltà. Questo dovrebbe essere un punto da considerarsi da monsignore vescovo di Luccoria e

dovrebbe allora riputarsi felice, quando con pastorale amore potesse condurre qualcuno di questi infelici all'ovile di Gesù Cristo, e non quando per un supposto e mai provato delitto li consegna al carnefice per trucidarli.

Fa indi menzione il prelato di Luccoria del cadavere di un Cristiano morto di ferite e gettato in una palude vicino al castello Jampoli, luogo della sua diocesi, pretendendosi ucciso dagli Ebrei col fondamento delle seguenti prove. Prima perchè 'homo interfectus in continuo Judaeorum famulatu commorans interiit', secunda perchè gli Ebrei 'impracticata quadam erga cadaver Christianum propensione ducti, illud quantocius etiam renitente

parocho loci reclamenteque populo tumulare qua vi qua precibus conabantur', terza perchè dovendosi trasportare il cadavere per essere riconosciuto nel tribunale, 'Judaei illud vi ac violenter duci praepediverunt', la quarta finalmente, perchè'plurimi fuga ex dicto oppido clanculum se subduxerunt'.

Ora discorriamola su di queste prove e ponderiamone il vigore. Chi crederà possibile, che gli Ebrei di Polonia, dopo di aver trucidato un Cristiano che era destinato al loro servizio, volessero poi lasciare il cadavere dell'estinto alla publica vista, e non assicurarlo entro di cupa e profonda fossa? Sanno pure gli Ebrei di Polonia e lo sanno per esperienza assai dolorosa, che un semplice sospetto di omicidio basta per crederli e sentenziarli colpevoli!

Io considero che la imputazione di questo Cristiano ucciso, come si pretende dal fisco di Luccoria, il di cui cadavere fu ritrovato nell'acqua, è affatto simile ali' imputazione che agli Ebrei di Alemagna si fece a tempo di Innocenzo IV., e chiaramente ciò si ravvisa da quello che scrive questo gran Pontefice nella sua lettera, già da me riferita, in cui si legge: 'Ac eis (cioè agli infelici Ebrei) malitiose obiiciunt hominis cadaver mortuì, si contigerit illud alicubi reperiri'. Stimò adunque Innocenzo IV., che una tale imputazione fosse maliziosa, vale a dire, non vera, ma falsa e calunniosa. Ora però il fisco di Luccoria, dotato di maggior discernimento di un Romano Pontefice, crede subito il fatto, e subito ne condanna gli Ebrei come 'autori ex professione', d'un tanto eccesso 'cum sit legi contrarium', come considera il lodato Pontefice.

Non è poi da stupirsi, che gli Ebrei al ritrovamento di quel cadavere usassero tutti quegli artifizi, descritti nell' accennata informazione, per impedire che non si procedesse dal fisco, perchè sanno, per luttuosa esperienza, che il sospetto cade subito in vigore della predominante prevenzione contro di esse, ed il sospetto sine effusione sanguinis di corpo e di borsa, non si purga. Se ne vogliamo

un indizio di questo procedere, sentiamo la testimonianza del dotto padre Giovanni Edera, della compagnia di Gesù, il quale nell' anno 1692 era lettore delle controversie di fede in Praga. Egli adunque, discorrendo de' Cristiani di Praga e dell' odio loro contro gli Ebrei, dice così: 'Essendo cosa molto nota e manifesta, che . . . più di una volta, e per leggerissime cause, la plebe diede il sacco al Ghetto e alla loro piazza de' stracci vecchi, avendone molti di essi gravemente feriti ed altri eziandio ammazzati'. Così il dotto padre Edera. Se adunque in Praga, per leggerissime cause, vengono dalla Cristiana plebe i miseri Ebrei gravemente feriti ed altri eziandio ammazzati, cosa non dovranno gl' infelici di più funesto temere in Polonia, dove la prevenzione de' Cristiani contro di essi è più predominante, e dove si fanno contro de' medesimi esecuzioni si frequenti? Quindi sì può facilmente comprendere la cagione, per cui gli Ebrei tentassero tutte le vie descritte nell' informazione della curia di Luccoria, di evitare la fiscale ricognizione di quel cadavere, ed alcuni di essi si appigliassero al partito della fuga, essendo li sventurati troppo sicuri che in ogni simile evento essi devono soccombere. Quindi ogni prudente uomo può saggiamente inferire, non potersi il supposto omicidio imputare agli Ebrei non solo per la

ragione comune dedotta da Innocenzo IV., 'cum sit legi contrarium', ma perchè non avrebbero essi, con evidente sicuro rischio della loro vita, lasciato alla publica vista il cadavere dell' estinto.

Ma che direbbe il fisco di Luccoria, se si provasse che un tale enorme delitto è stato qualche volta (Dio non voglia che sempre) commesso da Cristiani, anzi dal padre stesso, e poi venne imputato agli infelici Ebrei? Mi arrosisco in sospettarlo, ma molto più mi confondo nell' esibirne il monumento autentico segnato lettera D. Ivi leggesi, che un padre Cristiano mutilò in varie parti con mortali ferite una sua tenera figlia ed involta fra panni l'abbandonò nella mangiatoia di una osteria, tenuta giusta il costume di Polonia dagli Ebrei. Ivi leggesi, che la stessa fanciulla, la quale per divina volontà sopravvisse, di propria bocca confessò essere stata dal proprio padre con tante ferite e mutilazioni malconcia. E pure già contro gli Ebrei erasi formato il sospetto, già contro gli Ebrei si voleva procedere.

Non occorre che mi trattenga in riferire ciò che dice il prelato di Kiovia, perchè la maggior parte della di lui informazione può chiamarsi un' apologia di sua condotta, difendendosi dall' 'auri sacra fames'.

Soggiungerò solamente, che noi Cristiani dovremmo ricordarci che questa taccia d'infanticidio, d'omicidio veniva imputata da Gentili ne' primi secoli alla nostra religione. Sentiamo Tertulliano nel suo

Apologetico, al cap. 7: 'Dicimur sceleratissimi de sacramento infanticidii, nec vos (parla a' gentili), quod tamdiu dicimur, eruere curatis. Ergo aut eruite, si creditis; aut nolite credere, qui non eruistis'. Ottavio, celebre apologista della nascente nostra religione, presso di Minuzio Felice, spurgò egli pure il Cristianesimo da questa taccia che venivagli imputata da Cecilio, famoso avvocato del Gentilesimo. 'Illum (cioè Cecilio) iam velim convenire, qui initiare nos dicìt aut credit de caede infantis, aut sanguine . . . Nobis homicidium nec videre fas est, nec audire'. Atenagora parimente, valoroso difensore di noi Cristiani presso le corti degli imperatori Gentili, ci liberò da questa calunnia, dicendo: 'Quis igitur non amens in hoc vivendi instituto nos homicidas appellet? . . . Jam si quis ab eis rogitet, an viderint ipsi quae dicunt, nullus tam adeo impudenter mendax est, ut se vidisse fateatur'. Racconta Teodoreto, che Paladio, chiamato il divino, fu creduto reo di omicidio, perchè nella porta della di lui abitazione fu ritrovato un uomo ucciso, e già volevasi contro di lui procedere, sarei per dire alla Polacca, poichè, come narra Teodoreto, 'concurrerunt omnes et effracto ostio caedis factae poenam exigere volebant a divino Palladio' Per liberarlo vi volle il miracolo di resuscitare l'ucciso, il quale palesò l'innocenza di Palladio ed indicò l'uccisore ivi presente. 'Divinus autem Palladius (soggiunge Teodoreto), cum prius fuisset admirabilis, hinc merito evasit longe admirabilior'. Lo stesso fece S. Macario, che veniva imputato di omicidio, come narra Ruffino, nel libro 2 'Vitae patrum', cap. I. Un certo diacono, chiamato Giovanni, intimo famigliare del santo abbate Simeone, venne creduto reo di omicidio, per essersi ritrovato un uomo ucciso in sua casa. 'Res delata est ad

znagistratum. Is vero tulit sententiam, ut in furca suspenderetur diaconus Joannes'. Si sarebbe eseguita la sentenza, se il santo abbate Simeone non avesse nelle sue preghiere impetrato dal cielo il prodigioso discuoprimento dell' innocenza del diacono Giovanni, come si legge negli atti del santo abbate. Cosa non fecero i Svezzesi nel secolo passato nell'invasione della Germania, e specialmente in Paderbona contro de' padri Gesuiti? Imputarono agli innocenti religiosi la uccisione di un fanciullo e di averlo poscia gettato in un pozzo. Furono quindi tutti esiliati e spogliato il loro collegio di tutte le sostanze. Fu scoperto l'abbaglio, mentre si ritrovò essere una cicogna, e non un fanciullo sommerso in quel pozzo. Onde prese motivo Angelino Gareo di formarne una lepida canzone, che si legge nella seconda parte 'Hilariorum Piorum'. Dal sin qui dedotto, può conoscersi con quanta viva fede dobbiamo chiedere a Dio col Salmista: Redime me a calumniis hominum'. Non potendo negarsi che'calumnia conturbat

sapientem, et perdit robur cordis illius' come dice l'Ecclesiaste al cap. 7.

Spero però che la S. Sede prenderà qualche provvedimento per gli Ebrei di Polonia, come lo presero S. Bernardo, Gregorio IX. ed Innocenzo IV. per gli Ebrei di Alemagna e di Francia, 'ut non blasphematur nomen Christi' presso gli Ebrei, ed ancora per non difficultare maggiormente la di loro conversione. Non ardisco però di proporre progetto alcuno di liberare questi sventurati da tante stragi, sperando che Gesù Cristo suggerirà al suo vicario quei mezzi che saranno onorevoli al nome Cristiano e conducenti alla conversione di quegl' infelici.

Ego frater Laurentius Ganganelli, sancti officii consultor.

Riferitosi quanto sopra alli signori consultori medesimi

Feria seconda, die 24 [Decembris] 1759, fuerunt in voto, quod in re, de qua agitur, scribatur Rev^{mo} patri domino nuntio Poloniae, iuxta folium extendendum a Rev^{mo} padre consultore, nunc Eminenti" et Rev^{mo} cardinali Ganganelli, in rationibus relatis in eius voto in scriptis exarato.

III

REPORT OF CARDINAL GANGANELLI
[TRANSLATION]

Not only those who accuse should be believed.

[Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book I, Chapter 31 (33)][1]

IN the year 1758, there was presented to Benedict XIV. of glorious memory, by Jacob Selek, a Jew, of Polish nationality, a petition in which he implored from the Pontifical Beneficence an opportune defence against the vexations, imprisonments, extortions, torments and death to which his unhappy co-nationals were so often subjected on the pretext that when they manufactured their well-known Unleavened Bread they mingled it with human blood, and especially that of Christians. To such an extent has this been the case that, for the past ten years, if the corpse of any Christian were found by chance, murder was immediately suspected, and it was moreover soon believed to have been committed by the Jews of that neighbourhood for the above-mentioned superstitious purpose.

This was what occurred at Zaslaw, where the late Paul Sanguszko had his residence. The same thing happened in Szappatovski, where Prince Preez, Judge of Kremenetz, resides: near Ostra, where Prince Jablonowski lives: also in Pavolochi, where was the late Duke Michael Lubomirski: and lastly in Yampol, where Duke Casimir Radziwill lives, because a putrified body was found floating in the river Oregna. In view, therefore, of a false imputation which renders the Nation not only odious, but subject to many punishments, which injure their substance and torment their persons, the Jewish Nation of Poland implores some measure by which it may be defended from a stain that makes it opprobrious as a whole, and unjustly punishes it both in property and in person.

By order of the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office, the said supplication was consigned to me, in order that I might give my humble opinion on it. With my weak faculties I endeavoured to demonstrate the non-existence of the crime which was imputed to the Jewish Nation in Poland. Nevertheless, in order to proceed in such a matter with the necessary caution, I was of opinion that before coming to any resolution it would be well to write to the Apostolic Nuncio of Poland, so as to obtain exact information.

[[1] Observations and notes enclosed within square brackets are from the pen of the Editor.]

The petition having been put forward, together with my opinion respecting it, Your Eminences, in a Congregation of Graces held on March 21st, 1758, were pleased to approve it, decreeing that "the Reverend Father Lord Nuncio should be written to for

information, after hearing the Ordinaries of the places in which the crimes in question are supposed to have taken place."

It now remains to be considered what action ought to be suggested by me, now that the information about this matter has arrived from Poland. To fulfil my part, it is necessary that I should proceed to consider the information first in the general aspect, then in the particular, and lastly in detail.

I. REFLECTIONS UPON THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM POLAND IN GENERAL

In the populations of all countries are prevalent certain preconceptions which are called prejudices by the enlightened people of the age. Everybody knows how much time and trouble was necessary in order to undeceive the Spaniards on the matter of the celebrated "goblins" of Granada. Certainly, more than half a century passed before the venerable Innocent XI. condemned the error in one of his Apostolic Briefs.

But let us leave aside the attempt to indicate unwelcome characteristics peculiar to individual nations, since in some of them we should find vampires and ghosts, whence would follow an open censure of this kind of preconception. I will confine myself simply to pointing out the grave peril which is brought about for many innocent people, should they be judged by anyone who is under the influence of such prejudices.

The strength of preconception results in a readiness to persuade oneself of the truth of everything that is consistent with it, and at the same time great difficulty in believing the opposite. Thus that equipoise, which should necessarily accompany every just judgment, is lost, and innocence is sometimes wronged. "Readiness to believe is also a fault," wrote St. Bernard to his friend [Pope] Eugenius in his *De Consideratione* (Book ii, Chapter xiv). "Hence results frequent condemnation of the innocent." Moreover, it follows thence that, as the result of accepting many stories without examination, one comes to admit as truth something which is mere imposture. Concerning this the same illustrious Polish nation ought to remember what happened to it in the year 1254.

A certain astute man named Martin gave himself out as the founder of the "Brothers of Penitence, of the Order of the Blessed Martyrs", with fullest Apostolic privileges. The Bishops of that Kingdom, and even Boleslav [V.] (called the Chaste), moved by their innate piety to encourage what was good, assigned to him the Church of St. Mark in Cracow, and abundant resources. Yet the whole thing was an utter imposture, as Alexander IV. declared a few years later, in his letter dated May 15th, 1259, in which he notified that the Apostolic Indulgences put forward by the crafty Martin were false. The episode of Martin lasted indeed only a short while. Others, however, propagated by numerous witnesses, passing from mouth to mouth and from country to country, gained

for themselves a certain perpetuity, whereby the mark of blame attached to some family or nation has become almost indelible. Gratian, Peter the Lombard, and Peter Comestor were certainly three illustrious men, and yet they were slandered as being born of adultery, and were reputed as such by numerous writers (as St. Antonio relates in his *Historical Summary*, par. iii, tit. 18, Ch. vi, and especially Andre Tiraqueau, in the *Book of Nobility*, Ch. xv, No. 32). Nor are there lacking others in our own time who have to endure the opinion obtained concerning them by rumour. "Would any but a brainless man believe rumour?" says Tertullian in his *Apology* (Ch. vii). And indeed one needs to be really thoughtless to imagine that the three illustrious men above-mentioned were bastards; when by investigating their origin one finds that Gratian was born in Chiusi in Tuscany, Peter the Lombard in Novara, and Peter Comestor in Troyes, in Champagne, and the respected mother of each one of them is known. Similarly, Zosimus had the effrontery to slander Constantine the Great with the base character of bastard, and the calumny was believed by many other writers, and specially by Bodin in his *Historical Method* (Ch. iii, p. 302). The great Constantine was cleared from this calumnious stain in learned fashion by Michael Arpoldo in his *Britannia Illustrata* (Ch. ii, Section 2, Par. 6 and 7). We may repeat then with St. Bernard that "Readiness to believe is also a fault; whence comes about frequent condemnation of the innocent".

In order not to fall into this great defect, with such detriment to poor innocent people, even Pagan authors have made excellent suggestions. It was on this account that the celebrated Lucian brought out a book entitled *On Not Believing Calumnies Easily*. Then Seneca, in his *De Ira* (Book ii, Ch. xix), provides admirable and useful maxims to Princes and judges in order to put from their minds

prejudiced opinions and the tendency to believe evil rather than good. Let us conclude, then, with St. Prosper: "Let not the ears be opened easily to wild rumours"; for such defamations often owe their origin n to hatred in him who invents them, and the same passion in him who believes them. If all Christians ought to guard themselves from this prejudice, Princes and Judges especially should do so before pronouncing sentence. Wherefore King Theodoric (in *Cassiodorus*, Book iv., Letter 10) speaks thus for the common benefit: "It is shameful, in the administration of public law, to give license to personal hatreds; nor should passion be judged unguarded at a man's own discretion. For what pleases him who is angered is all too unjust. Men in a rage have no sense of justice, for while in the storm of their passion they are wild to take vengeance, they pay no regard to moderation."

When the passion of hatred is manifest, it is wrong to imagine that any Judge would let himself be led astray; but when the hatred is concealed under a cloak of zeal, and above all religious zeal, then the judge must exercise all caution that he may avoid being taken by malice unawares. For Theodoret, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, (Book i., ch. xxxiii.) found no other way of clearing the Emperor Constantine from the stain of injustice in having pronounced sentence of exile against so many illustrious ecclesiastics, among

whom was St. Athanasius, than to say that "He put faith in Bishops who endeavoured to conceal the truth, living a life of splendour and distinction, whereby they imposed on the Emperor and deceived him. . . . And I say these things . . . that I may answer for the Emperor, and may show the weakness of human nature, and that I may teach at the same time that not only those who accuse should be believed (however worthy they may seem to receive credence); for the other ear should be kept for the accused."

May God guard me from simply suspecting that the two Polish Bishops and the Apostolic Nuncio wished to conceal the truth by artifice, or that they sent fraudulent information here. It is possible, however, that they may have been not deceivers but deceived. In this, there is no cause for wonder, as the great Pope St. Gregory, speaking with his Peter, said in a similar case (in the first Book of his Dialogues, Ch. iv.): "Why do you wonder, Peter, that we make mistakes, we who are men?" The way in which Peter of Cella behaved in certain circumstances seems to me very much to the point. He writes, then, in Epistle ix. of Book vi.: "I am not accustomed to decide important matters either suddenly or hastily, but with much thought and mature deliberation. . . . Thus it happens that I do not

immediately believe every spirit, on account of him who transformed himself into an Angel of Light, and often proffers the poison of deception under the cloak of consultation. For it is, alike, a fault to believe everything and to believe nothing".

These sentiments are reputed no less useful for the prudent ruling of a Prince, than they are necessary for the just procedure of a Judge. Wherefore everyone knows the law *De Unoquoque*, § *De re judicata*, concerning which Hippolyte de Marsyllis, Singul. 75; Alexander of Imola, Cons. 107, Vol. 3; Misinger, obser. 6, cent. 6, have written so learnedly, and especially Gigas, part 3, § 6 and 10, where dealing with the atrocious crime of *lèse majesté*, he explains that one ought not to proceed to condemn on the foundation of the accusations only, without having first heard the supposed criminal, and without the means of defence having been allowed to him.

Guided by these principles, I am persuaded that I have sufficiently explained all that is necessary to demonstrate how we ought to behave concerning the informations from Poland, considered in general. All I demand is that, for the present, judgment should remain suspended until the examination in particular, and finally in the individual cases, has been made. This is so that we may afterwards come to the judgment of this cause with an unbiassed mind, according to the advice of the wise Greek Phocylides, "Let not judgment make an end to the dispute if the cause has not been equally examined on both sides". And rightly so, since to know is the character proper to the judge, as to command is the endowment of Princes, as Medea said in the Tragic Poet [L. Annæus Seneca, *Medea,* Act ii., l. 194]: "If thou judgest, know: if thou reignest, command".

II. REFLECTIONS ON THE AFORESAID INFORMATION IN PARTICULAR

It is now necessary for me to enquire, with the utmost diligence, how far the informations received from Poland are credible in their purely particular aspect. These informations, then, considered in particular, assume the cruelty of the Jews against certain Christians. This one assumption, upon which they turn, renders them immediately possible, and hence perhaps really true and fit for belief.[1]

In the first place, all know what zeal led the monk Rudolph, in Mayence, to repress the audacity of the Jews against the Christians. He considered it his special duty to preach to the Christian people

[[1] As will be seen, the Author proceeds later to demolish this hypothesis and the facts which can be adduced in its support.]

and excite in them a just resentment against the Jews, eager for Christian blood. In fact the Christians of Mayence, emboldened by the zeal of this monk, were stirred and made a great massacre of the Jews. We also learn from Raynaldus the just resentment of the Princes of Germany and of the King of France in the 13th century against the same Jews, who were consequently subjected to corporal and pecuniary punishments. The specific reason assigned for this is the same as that for which they have been justly punished in Poland, that is: *"That in the same solemnity* (*i.e.* of Unleavened Bread) *they make communion with the heart of a slain child, and . . . have laid to their charge the corpse of a dead man"*.

We also hear that in Padua, in the year 1475, the Jews were most severely punished for this atrocious crime, of having slain a child. In Verona likewise, in the year 1603, a Jew was brought up for trial, for the following reason: "Having cruelly slain an infant that he might put his innocent blood to most evil and wicked uses, as (it was attempted to prove by certain historical records) has been done at other times". In the year 1705, on the Rialto Bridge in Venice, near the church of S. Giacomo, in order to reproach the perfidious Jewish nation with this horrible misdeed, a painting was displayed to the public view, in which were depicted "Jews killing a child, with other figures and inscriptions".

In the Papal States also, in Viterbo to be precise, on June 13th, 1705, the Jews (we are told) tried to commit a similar act of barbarity against a Christian boy, and in Ancona, in the year 1711, they were accused of having bled and killed a Christian boy.

If we want to add the testimony of well-known writers to so many statements of fact, we can find in them also confirmation of the same crime imputed to the Jews. Reference may be thus made to the work of Fr. Luigi Contarino, Crucifer, entitled *Il vago e dilettevol giardino*, printed in Vicenza in 1597. In the appendix to this book (p. 80), will be found the following section: "The twelve persecutions of the Jews against the Christians". See also Giulio Morosini (formerly a Rabbi among the Jews, afterwards a Christian) in his *Via*

della Fede, Rome 1683, in par. 3, ch. 12, p. 1393, where may be found a long and melancholy series of examples of various Christian boys murdered by the Jews. The case of the Blessed Simon of Trent, who was martyred by the Jews in 1475, is well known to the world. A similar event also occurred in Prague, because of which the mother was beheaded and the father broken on the wheel, and the story may be read in the German language.

Now if this crime is imputed to the Jews by so many nations, in

nearly every period and place (even where they are subjected to strict control), if it is imputed to them moreover by so many writers, with evident proofs, it is possible for everyone to see on what a basis of truth the informations from Poland on this subject must rest. This is all the more so since in Poland the Jews have so much power that they have many Christians subjected to them, as may be seen in the Encyclical of Benedict XIV. of glorious memory "To the Primate, Archbishops and Bishops of the Kingdom of Poland", dated June 14th, 1751. *"If these are silent, the stones will cry out".* In Posen, on the facade of a Church, a picture is displayed to the public view, in which is represented one of the Rabbis of the Synagogue with a knife in his hand in the act of cutting the throat of a Christian, with other Jews holding bowls to collect the blood.

I have thought it my duty to put together all the facts here adduced, in order to estimate the probability and credibility of the Informations in Particular which have come from Poland concerning the matter under discussion. Now, however, I cannot be refused permission to shew, in spite of this, the unsubstantial character of the authorities cited with regard to the object at issue.

The first proof produced in justification of the narratives is provided for us by the Monk Rudolph. Now let us see whether the procedure expounded by him against the Jews was approved by competent judges. Henry, Archbishop of Mayence, under whose eyes the above described massacre of the Jews was perpetrated, disapproved of the conduct of the Monk Rudolph, and manifested his resentment to the glorious St. Bernard. Now let us hear the reply which the holy Abbot made to the Archbishop Henry in his 323rd [365th] letter.

> That man of whom you speak in your letter (he speaks of Brother Rudolph) is sent neither by man, nor as man, nor for man, nor yet by God. For if he boasts of being a Monk or a Hermit, and from this takes upon himself the liberty or office of preaching, he may and ought to know that a Monk has not the office of one who teaches, but of one who laments; for indeed to him a city should be a prison and solitude Paradise. Yet this man on the contrary holds solitude to be a prison and a city Paradise. . . . Truly three things in him are highly blameworthy: "the usurpation of preaching" (with which he stirred up the people to massacre the Jews): "contempt of the Bishops" (who regretted the slaughter of these unhappy people); and "license of approving murder" (by promoting and approving of the extermination of the unfortunates).

St. Bernard then goes on to indicate the way in which Christians ought to behave towards Jews, and says:

> Does not the Church triumph more abundantly over the Jews day by day, by convincing or converting them, than if she were suddenly and simultaneously to destroy them at the edge of the sword? For has that universal prayer of the Church been appointed vainly, which is offered for the perdifious [*sic*; perfidious –JR, ed.] Jews from the rising up of the sun to its going down, that the Lord God may remove the veil from their hearts, that they may be brought out of their darkness to the light of truth? For unless she hoped that those who believe not now will believe, it would seem superfluous and vain to pray for them. But with the eye of piety she considers what gracious regard God hath for him who gives back good for evil and love for hatred. What becomes then of that saying [Psalms, xlix., 12]: *"See that thou slayest them not"*? What of the saying [Romans, ii., 25-6]: "*When a multitude of people shall have entered, then all Israel shall be saved"*?

The immoderate zeal of Rudolph was not confined to the limits of Mayence. He traversed France, and other parts of Germany, stirring up the Christians to massacre the Jews, in consequence of which he received other well-merited and bitter reproaches from the Abbot of Clairvaux, as may be gathered from his 363rd letter addressed to the Clergy and people of Eastern France. In this he openly reproves the deed of Rudolph: "The Jews ought not be persecuted, or massacred, or even driven into exile". Wherefore Benedict XIV. of glorious memory, in his Encyclical to the Primate, Archbishops and Bishops of Poland, sent on June 19th, 1752, which begins *A quo primum,* is likewise opposed to "the excessive and frenzied zeal of Rudolph". It may be concluded, then, that from the action and conduct of Brother Rudolph it is impossible to deduce any fault of the Jews against Christians, but rather of Christians, led astray by a hermit, against the Jews.

Let us now pass on to the representations of the King of France and of the Princes of Germany, touching the crime of the Jews: "that in the same solemnity (*i.e.*, that of Unleavened Bread) they made communion with the heart of a slain child . . . and lay to their charge the corpse of a dead man" (it is that very same crime that is imputed to them by the Poles). To decide properly concerning this imputation, I wish to avail myself of a Judge whom none can consider suspect. Innocent IV., the Supreme Pontiff, in the year 1247, was interpellated by the Jews themselves, who had been tormented in property and person in Germany and in France, because of the above-mentioned imputation. Let us see how the esteemed Pontiff conducted himself in this matter. I will therefore transcribe the very letter of Innocent IV., referred to by Raynaldus, which may, so to speak, serve as a safe guide for the ruling which may be given on the present matter of the Jews of Poland. He writes, then, "To the

Archbishops and Bishops established in Germany" in the following form:

> We have received a mournful complaint from the Jews of Germany (here one may rightly say *"of Poland"*) telling how some Princess, both ecclesiastical and lay, and other nobles and powerful persons in your cities and dioceses, devise evil plans against them and invent various pretexts in order to rob them unjustly of their goods and gain possession thereof. This they do without stopping to consider prudently that it is from the Archives of the Jews, so to speak, that the testimonies of the Christian faith came forth. Holy Scripture pronounces, among other injunctions of the Law: *Thou shall not kill,* forbidding them when they celebrate the Passover to touch any dead body. Nevertheless, they are falsely accused that in that same solemnity they make communion with the heart of a slain child! This is believed to be enjoined by the Law, whereas in fact it is manifestly contrary to it. Moreover, if the body of a dead man is by chance found anywhere, they maliciously ascribe the cause of death to the action of the Jews.

This is precisely what is set forth in the petition presented to the Holy See in the name of the Jews of Poland. So that if Innocent IV. accepted the petitions of the Jews of Germany, and defended them from this false imputation, charging the Christian Prelates and Potentates to protect them, it seems that common-sense requires that the Holy See should now take into consideration the defence of the Jews of Poland from whatever injury has come upon them through the above-mentioned false imputation.

I will now give the rest of the letter of Innocent IV:

> On this and many other fictitious pretexts they rage against the Jews . . . and despoil them, against God and justice, of their possessions. By starvation, imprisonment and many heavy persecutions and oppressions, they harass them, inflicting upon them divers kinds of punishment and condemning very many of them to most shameful death. . . . Wherefore, fearing that they would be utterly exterminated, they have thought well to have recourse to the wisdom of the Apostolic See. We, therefore, being unwilling that the aforesaid Jews should be unjustly harassed . . . do ordain that you skew yourselves favourable and benign towards them. Duly redress all that has been wrought against the Jews in the aforementioned matter by the said Prelates, Nobles and Potentates; and do not allow them in future to be unjustly molested by anybody on this or any other similar charge.

Innocent IV. wrote another letter in the same strain in defence of the Jews to the Bishops of France, as Raynaldus notes at the same place.

Innocent IV., then, did not believe that the Jews committed that crime which, imputed to them in Poland even at the present day,

has caused them to be tortured and killed in that kingdom "with various kinds of punishment and most shameful death". Hence he forbids similar procedure on account of a crime in proof of which no probability exists, and commands that they should be

indemnified. I am aware that the Magdeburg [Protestant] Church Historians [*Centuriae ecclesiasticae historiae*], Centuria xiii., Ch. xv.,[1] with their usual effrontery, venture to suggest that Innocent IV. was influenced by a large bribe disbursed by the Jews when he promulgated these two letters in their favour. In order to give the lie to these most impudent calumniators, it is enough to remember that Gregory IX., in the year 1235, issued an Encyclical "To faithful Christians", and the following year wrote to all the Bishops of France, and that both of the letters were in justification of the Jews in the matter of this same crime which is imputed to them by Poland, or by certain people of that Kingdom. We should reflect also on the Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff Innocent III., *"Licet perfidia Judaeorum",* which may be read in Volume I of his letters (letter 300, p. 540). In this we shall see how many other Roman Pontiffs have undertaken to protect this unhappy people. "Although they may wish rather to remain in their stubbornness than to know the prophecies of the Prophets and the secrets of the Law, and to arrive at the knowledge of the Christian faith (says Innocent there); nevertheless, because they demand the help of Our protection and because Christian piety is merciful; We therefore, treading in the footsteps of Our predecessors of happy memory, the Roman Pontiffs, Callixtus, Eugenius, Alexander, Clement and Celestinus, accept their petition and grant them the shield of our protection". However much the Jews may be reproved for their contumacy and obstinacy, yet we never read that they have been reproved by the Holy See for the crime imputed to them in Poland. On the contrary they have been positively cleared of such an imputation by Gregory IX. and Innocent IV.; and they were protected with great clemency by Innocent III., following the example of so many of his Predecessors. This would never have happened had they really been guilty of the supposed atrocious crime.

Let us return from France and Germany to Italy, and let us land on the shores of the Most Serene Republic of Venice, where the crime which is foisted on the unhappy Jews by certain people of Poland is supposed to have been proved. Two facts are brought forward; one which happened in Padua in the year 1475, the other in Verona in the year 1603. Lastly let us recall to memory the picture displayed on the Rialto Bridge in the year 1705, on which were depicted Jews

[[1] Actually, this passage refers to the action of Pope Gregory IX.]

killing a child. Hence it may be concluded with the Tragic Poet [L. Annæus Seneca, *Medea,* Act ii, l. 156] that "great evils do not lie hid"; for the Lord would not allow that such an impiety on the part of the Jews should remain hidden and unpunished.

I cannot, however, be persuaded to believe that the Most Serene Republic, which has always known how to "consult the interests of country, spare the afflicted, refrain from cruel slaughter, and give time to anger" [Seneca, *Octavia,* Act ii., ll. 473-4], would have wished either to despoil the Jews of their goods, or to deprive them of life, because of the alleged crime of which we are treating. In fact, on examining the two cases cited, of Padua and of Verona, I find the exact opposite. For in the Doge's letter sent on April 22nd 1475,

to the Captain of Padua, the latter's conduct towards the Jews is reproved. As a sign of his enlightened mind, which does not allow itself to be occupied by prejudice, the Doge openly protests in the said letter in the following form: "We assuredly believe that the rumour of the slain child is an invention and a pretext". The Most Serene Republic therefore recognised that the rumour spread abroad about a Christian boy killed by the Jews was without any foundation of truth and a mere artifice to extort money from those unfortunate people.[1] When the examination of this Polish accusation has been concluded, it may well be (as I hope will happen) that the reply from the Tribunal of Rome also will have to state: "We certainly believe that the rumour of the slain child is an invention and a pretext".

I come to the case of Verona, and I find in this, too, pure love of truth, although it was a question of condemning Christian co-religionists and doing justice to the Jews. It is indeed no small glory to a ruler not to let himself be overruled by blood-ties, as Theseus sang in the Tragic Poet [Seneca, *Hippolytus,* Act iv., lines 114-6]: "Oh, beyond measure powerful! In how strong a chain dost thou hold blood-relations, O Nature, whom we venerate even against our will!" In Verona, then, a certain Jew named Joseph was defended by a celebrated Christian advocate, against the charge on which he had been accused that "he had cruelly killed a child, in order that he might make a mock of the most Holy Death of our Saviour, and put innocent blood to most wicked and nefarious uses, which, as the Prosecutor has attempted to prove, by certain records of circumforaneous history, has been done at other times". However, the

[[1] In fact, this correspondence referred to the case of Simon of Trent, of which Ganganelli makes mention elsewhere; cf. Ciscato, *Gli ebrei in Padova,* 1901, pp. 135, 264-5.]

said Jew Joseph was defended by the Christian advocate from the aforesaid accusation (which is the same as that brought forward in Poland), was declared innocent and, as such, was released. I think, however, that it is necessary to report literally the sentence of acquittal pronounced on February 28th 1603:

> The said Joseph, through his most excellent advocate, as well as in his own legitimate defence, has argued and indeed demonstrated, by bringing forward various passages of the Holy Bible, that the Hebraic rite abhors the shedding of blood. He has indicated moreover that various Princes held this rumour of the use of blood to be "vain and false" and have issued special ordinances to that effect: namely [the Regent] Bona [of Savoy] and Gian Galeazzo Sforza [her son], Dukes of Milan, as appears under the date May 19th, 1479;[1] Pietro Mocenigo, Doge of Venice, dated April 22nd, 1475; and lastly the Emperors Frederick III., Charles V., and Maximilian II., dated March 8th, 1566, in which it is affirmed that in the past the Supreme Pontiffs have forbidden men to believe the accusation of the alleged impious abuse of Christian blood. In consequence of all this, suspicion of such impious wickedness on their part is removed. On this account, the most Illustrious Lord Podestà (*at that time Giustiniano Contarino*), together with the most Excellent Consulate, has released the aforesaid Joseph.[2]

From this sentence of Verona in the case of the Jew Joseph, we may recognise the justice of the Councillors and the wisdom of the Podestà, in considering the improbability of this crime as regards the Jews, who, by reason of their ritual, abhor the shedding of blood. They also considered that many Christian Princes "have held this rumour of the use of blood to be vain, null and false". They considered that "it was forbidden by Supreme Pontiffs to believe in the accusation of the alleged impious abuse of Christian blood". In consequence of all these highly reasonable considerations, that wise Magistrate determined that "all suspicion of such impious wickedness is removed". Therefore, however much the accuser tried to prove against the Jew Joseph this same crime from the examples "which, as the Prosecutor has attempted to prove, by certain records of circumforaneous history, has been done at other times", that wise Magistrate nevertheless did not consider it either true or probable, but on the contrary removed all shadow of suspicion. Would that it had pleased the Lord that the unhappy Jacob Selek had to present himself at the Tribunal of Padua or of Verona rather than at those of Poland, since he would then have delivered his nation from tortures, heavy tributes and executions!

[[1] The full text of this edict may be found in Guidetti, *Pro Judaeis*, pp. 280-294, where it is published from the original.]

[[2] The full document is published in Guidetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-3.]

Let us now repair to Venice, and see how the Most Serene Republic conducted herself when she heard that a large painting in which were depicted "Jews killing a child, with other figures and inscriptions" was displayed on the Rialto bridge. Here, then, is the decree published on April 8th, 1705: "Order was made for the said picture to be wholly and entirely effaced and deleted". Would to God, that similar sentiments of clear realisation might yet penetrate into Poland, so that the picture, which I shall mention in due time, were no longer to be seen in Posen! The two other accusations brought against the Jews in Viterbo and in Ancona had a similar result, as nothing was found out against the unhappy accused, as may be seen from the Acts which were drawn up for these occurrences.[1]

From the facts set forth above, I must now pass to the writers. The first among these is Father Luigi Contarini, Crucifer, author of the work entitled *Il vago e dilettevol giardino*, which in the Appendix recounts the twelve persecutions of the Christians at the hands of the Jews. Let us linger a little over the aforesaid title of the work of this good Father. He calls a "pleasant and delightful garden" this work in which, describing the twelve persecutions, nothing is ultimately seen save a terrible and tragic spectacle of the shedding of innocent blood by Barbarians. If the facts narrated by him correspond with the truth as well as the matter with which he deals corresponds with the title of the work, we have not, to my thinking, any basis on which to confide in the Polish accusations against the Jews! However, we may perhaps excuse the good Father, upon reflecting that even now, in

Rome, that place in which the injured are received, shrieking on account of the acute pain they suffer, is called the Hospital of Consolation! He dedicates this, his "pleasant and delightful garden", drenched with innocent blood, to Father Lauro Badoaro, "his very dear nephew". In the dedication he calls this dear nephew of his "a true and admirable portrait of the Divine eloquence of the great Fathers of the Church Crucifer". This title, the "Church Crucifier", would have displeased St. Augustine no less than the title "Meridian Church", which the Donatists arrogated to themselves. If the proverb be true that is engraved on the Tower near the Three Fountains, *Tell a lion from his Claw,* we can now predict the weight of these twelve persecutions of the Christians

[[1] For the Viterbo case of 1705, see *Revue des Etudes Juives*, XVIII., 197-8, and the contemporary publications there cited: for episodes in Ancona and the neighbourhood, 1712 and 1721, cf. Zunz, *Die Synagogale Poesie des Mittelalters,* p. 352, and *Indice dei documenti conservati nell' archivio dell' università israelitica di Ancona* (Offprinted from *Corriere Israelitico,* 1914), pp. 12, 13.]

at the hands of the Jews. Well, let us hear the enumeration of them from this Father of the Church Crucifer. He fixes the first persecution made by the Jews against the Christians under Herod, when "he slew many children of two years old and under" [St. Matthew ii, 16]. The writer ought to assure us of two facts: first, that Herod was a Jew; and secondly, that these boys were Christians. For the first, the Crucifer Father will find no one to believe him except Scaliger and Casaubon, while Josephus the Jew, in the fourteenth book of his *Antiquities,* Ch. iii.; Eusebius, in the first book of the *Ecclesiastical History,* Ch. ii., Origen, in the seventeenth *Homily on Genesis;* St. Epiphanius, in his *Heresy,* § 20; St. Ambrose, Book III., on St. Luke; St. Jerome in the Commentary on the third chapter of Hosea; St. Augustine, in Book I. of the "City of God", Ch. xiv., and other Fathers and writers give it as their view that Herod was not a Jew but an alien. Hence Natale Alessandro, in Volume ii., Dissertation 9 [of his *Ecclesiastical History,* Paris, 1677-86], establishes the following proposition: "Herod was an Idumaean, and an alien as regards the Jews". Next, concerning the other point, that the Innocents were Christians, it is enough to know that Baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ in the thirtieth year of his age, while when the massacre of the Innocents happened, our Redeemer counted but a few months from his birth from the immaculate womb of the Virgin. So that this first persecution of the Jews against the Christians may rightly be cancelled from the number of these twelve persecutions.

Even less can the other eleven be enumerated in such a list. To be persuaded of this, it is enough simply to reflect upon the titles of these. Thus the Crucifer Father places the second persecution under the Emperor Nero, the third under the Emperor Domitian, the fourth under the Emperors Nerva and Trajan, the fifth under the Emperor Hadrian, the sixth persecution under Antonius Verus and Commodus, the seventh under the Emperor Severus, the eighth under the Emperor Maximinus, the ninth under the Emperor Decius, the tenth under the Emperors Gallus Ostilianus, Valentinus, Valentian and Valerian, the eleventh under the Emperor Aurelian, the twelfth under the most cruel Emperor

Diocletian and Maximian. This is the reckoning of the Jewish persecutions enumerated by the Crucifer Father, who winds it up as follows: "The end of the twelve persecutions at the hands of Jews." I omit the consideration of many things there narrated, which deviate from the truth. Let me only be permitted to ask this Crucifer Father if Nero, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the numerous other

Emperors named by him were in fact Jews, and who circumcised them? Therefore, let this writer remember what the Tragic Poet[1] said in the *Troades* [Act ii., lines 169 and 408-9]: "Portents too big for truth are scarce believed . . . . . Idle tales, empty words, uneasy dreams." And truly one ought to sympathise with Father Contarini because he planted this, his "pleasant and delightful garden", with plants taken from Pedro Mexia, who was a planter of carrots [i.e., hoaxes] as is known to the learned and to lovers of truth.

Let us now pass on to Giulio Morosini, first a Jew and afterwards a Christian, first a Rabbi among his own people and afterwards a writer among us. In these neophytes from Judaism there is wont to occur a certain transport against their own nation, by reason of which they not seldom go beyond the limits of truth. Wherefore I observe that not only Giulio Morosini, but also D. Paulo Sebastiano Medici, another neophyte from Judaism, personally known by me, put forth various accusations against the Jews. The Jews of Rome printed and published a full vindication against the same, to which this Medici could not reply.[2] At the end of the last century there was issued to the public light from the press of Abraham of Worth a book entitled *An Admonition of Great Profit.* The anonymous author therein makes it evident that it is an utter imposture that the Jews go in search of Christian blood, in order to make superstitious use of it and to knead their Unleavened Bread. He quotes many texts from the Old Testament, various oracles of the supreme Pontiffs, and copious testimonies from well-known writers. In the year 1753, from the press of Johana Ignaz Heyinger, there was produced in Vienna, with the necessary licence, a book composed by Ludwig von Sonnenfels, a Professor at the University of that place, entitled: *Judaism Accused, Examined, and Absolved* (in Poland they would say *and condemned*!) *concerning the use of innocent Christian blood.* The above-named author, having been a Jew, and afterwards with Divine help having passed over to the Christian Religion, makes it plain how repugnant the use of Christian blood is to the Jewish nation. What he says in the Preface should make a great impression on the minds of Christians, and move them to defend the Jews from this stain rather than impute it to them. Here, then, are the words of the said author:

[[1] L. Annaeus Seneca, so often cited here.]

[[2] Tranquillo Vita Corcos, *Alla sacra congregatione del S. Offizio per l'università degl' Ebrei. Memoriale* (Rome, 1697).]

> Just as we are forbidden, by the general law of charity, to ascribe anything false or wrong to any assembly of men, of whatever superstition they may be, so in the same manner we are admonished to strive to invalidate and annul by every means all preconceived incrimination of them, as being opposed to the charity and truth aforesaid. For besides the fact that these accusations, imputed to the opposite side, are contrary both to eternal and to created truth, at the same time they break the sacred bond of human society. Hence they cause, in minds which dissent from Religion, besides contempt and bitterness, such harmful hatred that at last they do not even endure to hear of our saving Faith, concluding erroneously that it rests only upon falsehood and hatred. Taught this by experience, I therefore write as one who was devoted to the rites of the Jews from my birth and my cradle, till at last, by the infinite mercy of God, the scales of infidelity having fallen from my eyes, I beheld the light of the Gospel, and, by the Precious Blood of my Saviour, was discharged from the debt of eternal death. It cannot be told sufficiently how powerfully the aforesaid futile inventions, of which they are falsely accused by us, kindle in the heart of the Jews the fire of a general hatred of Christians. This it is, besides other things, that has prevented them hitherto from hastening to our Faith in greater numbers.

Paul of Burgos, formerly a Jewish Doctor, and afterwards a Catholic and raised to the Bishopric of Burgos, was of the same opinion. He wrote as follows on the first Chapter of the holy Genesis:

> Wherefore to attribute this error to the Jews is not useful in bringing them to the truth; for they think that we invent lies against them, which presents no small obstacle in our making them believe us.

In this matter, then, fanaticism, as we perceive it both in Paolo Sebastiano Medici and in Giulio Morosini, is not wanted. But, if we want to give credence to neophytes, we have the celebrated Nicholas de Lyra of my Order, we have the famous Leone de Modena,[1] we have Paul of Burgos, Ludwig von Sonnenfels, and many others, as may be seen in the Rabbinical Library printed by Ugolini. In this, no such imputation against the Jews may be read; but on the contrary it is seen to be bravely combated by them "for the pure love of truth". Giulio Morosini ought then to have followed the track and the sentiments of many other celebrated writers converted from Judaism to the Christian Faith; and he should have remembered

[[1] The Franciscan Nicholas de Lyra, the great Biblical commentator, was said to be of Jewish descent, though not born a Jew. Leone da Modena, the Venetian Rabbi of the seventeenth century (who composed a treatise on Jewish ceremonies for James I. of England) never embraced Christianity.]

that "Princes have held this rumour of the use of blood to be vain and false", and that from many other records "all suspicion of such impious wickedness on their part is removed", as may be read in the judgment pronounced on February 28th, 1603, by the Podestà of Verona, in favour of the Jew Joseph, who had been falsely accused of such a crime (as I

have demonstrated in its place).

Neglecting fictions of this type, which arise sometimes from hatred, and often from prejudiced preconceptions (examples may be seen in my first section, in which prejudices and the injuries arising therefrom to innocent people are spoken of), I must pass on to the consideration of real and established facts. I admit, then, as true the fact of the Blessed Simon, a boy three years old, killed by the Jews in Trent in the year 1475 in hatred of the faith of Jesus Christ (although it is disputed by Basnage and Wagenseil); for the celebrated Flaminio Cornaro, a Venetian Senator, in his work *On cult of the child St. Simon of Trent* [Venice, 1753, &c.] disposes of all the doubts raised by the above-mentioned critics. It should, however, be noted that Sixtus IV. (a luminous planet of my Order), in whose Pontificate this tragic event occurred in Trent, promulgated an Apostolic Brief in which he forbade the devotion which was paid to the aforesaid Blessed Simon by his fellow-citizens.[1] Indeed, the matter went so far that this devotion remained forbidden during the course of nearly a century, until in 1588 the great Pontiff Sixtus V. (another luminous planet of my Seraphic Order), by his Apostolic Brief, conceded the Office and Proper Mass in honour of the Blessed Simon, adding to these a Plenary Indulgence to any person who, having confessed and communicated, visited on his Feast the Church in which his relics are to be found. The Brief of Sixtus V. is cited in the immortal work *On the Canonization of Saints*, by Benedict XIV., of glorious memory (Book I., Ch. xiv., No. 4). The subsequent Brief of Sixtus V. is cited (p. 207) in the *Apologetical Dissertation on the Martyrdom of the Blessed Simon*, printed in Trent in the year 1747, by Father Benedetto da Cavalesio.

I also admit the truth of another fact, which happened in the year 1462 in the village of Rinn, in the Diocese of Brixen, in the person of the Blessed Andreas, a boy barbarously murdered by the Jews in hatred of the Faith of Jesus Christ. I observe, however,

[[1] The Author might have added that the Bishop of Ventimiglia, sent to Trent by the Pope to investigate the facts of the case, reported that the Jews were innocent and that Simon had been killed by Christians in order to have a pretext for ruining them.]

that the diocese of Brixen had to have patience from 1462 till December 15th, 1753, before obtaining from the Holy See the concession of the Office and the Mass. On January 14th, 1754, the Plenary Indulgence was granted to those who should visit the Church at Rinn (where the relics of the aforesaid Blessed Andreas rest) on July 12th. Hence the Diocese of Brixen had to have patience for nearly three centuries before the devotion of the Blessed Child Andreas was permitted by the Holy Roman Church. Finally we ought to observe concerning these two events, of Brixen and of Trent, that which the glorious memory of Benedict XIV. wisely taught in a letter of February 22nd, 1755, to Mgr. Benedetto Veterani, in which (par. 29, page 50) he prescribes that in order to have well-founded proofs of similar infanticides imputed to the Jews, these should be *notorious crimes, known to the people, execrated by all, and avenged by the Magistrates.*

Wherefore, although mention is made by the Bollandists, under the date March 24th, of a certain John, a boy killed by the Jews in hatred of the Faith, in the Diocese of Cologne; although Ballet, on the same day, March 24th, makes remembrance of a certain William, murdered by the Jews in hatred of the Faith in England; although Theophile Raynaud, in his work entitled *Concerning Martyrdom by Plague* (par. 2, Ch. ii., No. 7), mentions another boy likewise killed by the Jews in a village near Toledo, named La Guardia; although Father Benedetto da Cavalesio, on page 246 of his above-mentioned *Dissertation,* speaks of Lorenzino, a boy bled by the Jews in the year 1485 in Marostica, in the territory of Vicenza, and in proof of this fact produces attestation of the Episcopal Court of Padua (p. 253); and although it is said by the authors cited that the aforesaid boys are recognized as beatified in their respective places; yet the glorious memory of Benedict XIV. in the above-mentioned letter (p. 34), speaking of the aforesaid cases, wisely adds: "It cannot be said that they are beatified by the Holy See . . . and much less can they be canonized, no suit having been formed, or sent to Rome to the Roman Pontiff in order that he might approve it". One cannot take much account of the event which happened in Prague, both because authentic records are lacking and because the infanticide was committed by the child's own father in hatred of the Baptism which had been furtively bestowed on his son. We may, however, admire a triumph of Divine Grace, since, after various bodily tortures to which he was subjected by the Magistrate, a few moments before expiring under the torments, the dying father asked for Holy Baptism, declaring that he had willingly suffered all the

torments in penance for the crime committed by him in the murder of his own innocent child.

It should then be concluded that, among so many infanticides imputed by writers to the Jews in hatred of our Holy Faith, only two can be said to be true, since these two only can be said to be proved by authentic proofs after much diligent search and a considerable lapse of time. When, therefore, I come to consider the reports from Poland individually, I shall show in a clear light how meagre, doubtful and uncertain are the proofs adduced of the pretended imputations. Indeed, I wonder whether it may not be reasonably suspected that the whole is an imposture of Christians against the Jews!

I do not believe, then, that by admitting the truth of the two facts of Brixen and of Trent, one can reasonably deduce that this is a maxim, either theoretical or practical, of the Jewish nation; for two isolated events are not enough to establish a certain and common axiom. For, just as the relatives of some individual who has committed a crime are not deprived thereby of honours and advancement to higher ranks and dignity (as we see happening in so many families in our own times, however much their splendour may formerly have been eclipsed by the cloud of some dark deed), so ought we to conclude in our case, unless we deliberately desire to blind ourselves. This should certainly be our attitude in view not only of the judgment of Verona already cited, but much more of the teaching of St. Bernard, adduced against Brother Rudolph, and lastly of the sentiments of

Gregory IX. and Innocent IV., who, as I have shown, exclude this pernicious maxim from the Hebrew nation. It cannot be urged against me that the duty of clearing the Jews of Poland from this stain makes me rely on very weak and unsubstantial proofs, for I can show that St. Augustine, in order to defend the Catholics of Africa from the charge of having murdered the Bishops Donatus and Marcolus, avails himself of the same argument. He then, in his work against Petilian the Donatist (Book II., Ch. xxi.), replies thus to the aforesaid accusation: "Wherefore concerning all such envious accusations, the wheat of Christ (that is the Catholic Church scattered throughout all the world) replies thus to you in a free and confident voice: *If you do not prove what you say, it concerns no one; if on the other hand you do prove it, it does not concern me"*. Hence the Jewish nation living in Poland may justly reply to the two cases of the Blessed Simon and the Blessed Andreas, which are considered to be proved: "If you do prove this, it does not concern us". This is so far the case, that a crime

committed by one member of a family and of a nation, cannot and ought not be imputed to other relatives or fellow-citizens.

The picture in Posen may have as much basis of truth as have the inscriptions on the two horses [on the Capitol at Rome] which give the Quirinal its name, that is "The work of Phidias and of Praxiteles", for it is known to scholars what an anachronism is contained in the said inscription. I imagine that this picture would deserve to be treated in the same manner as the other which was displayed in 1705 on the Rialto Bridge, concerning which the Most Serene Republic "ordered the said picture to be wholly and entirely effaced and deleted". Tertullian relates, in his *Apology,* Ch. xvi., that in the square at Carthage there was displayed to the public view a picture with the following inscription: "The ass-like God of the Christians." In the said picture was shown a monster "with ass's ears, one foot with a clawed hoof, and wearing a toga", with the aforesaid inscription. The said Tertullian then mentions that "the Christians laughed both at the name and form" of such a spectacle. If the Christians in Carthage laughed at the sight of the aforesaid picture, I imagine that the Jews of Poland, on seeing the picture in Posen, also have reason to laugh. In the century in which we are living, in an Italian capital, a famous painter gave cause for laughter by the following incident. He had painted on a canvas the portrait of a very notable personage, who, objecting to the price asked by the painter, refused to take it, saying it was not like him. Now since "poets and painters have always had an equal licence in daring invention" [Horace, A. P. q.], the said painter, resenting the rebuff, displayed that same portrait to the public with the distinctive device on the head that the Jews have to wear. The annoyance of the personage was so great that the painter had to justify himself before the Prince, to whom he had been accused. The painter then spoke thus in his own defence: "I would never have thought that a portrait, not held to resemble the original when dressed as a Christian, would be recognized as a proper likeness with the device of a Jew." With this witty reply the painter appeased the Prince's anger. Now I imagine (and not without reason) that the picture at Posen may have been passed off by popular opinion as representing the Jews in the act of killing a Christian, although in

reality there is nothing with which to prove either the theory or the practice of such a crime on the part of the Jews, as the Supreme Pontiffs Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. declared. Indeed, a picture placed on the facade of a church ought to have no other signification than the apparent one; and it would be in

place there only if it represents a martyrdom, but never a superstitious act, such as the use of Christian blood to knead the Unleavened Bread. If, then, there is room for a better founded and more reasonable conjecture, I am of the opinion that the said picture may and should refer to what happened under Boleslav III. at the beginning of the twelfth century. The Pomeranians, in order to divert Boleslav from the siege of Belgard which he had undertaken, made a furious incursion into Poland where, committing pillage and carnage, they filled those regions with horror. In order to escape the fury of the invaders, the holy and aged Archbishop Martin took refuge on the vaulting of the Cathedral. Then the Pomeranians who were on his track came upon the Archdeacon (whom they took to be the Archibishop), and carried him off into Pomerania with all the sacred vessels of the Temple. But the prayers of the holy Archbishop moved Heaven to a just vengeance. The Pomeranians, in a sudden frenzy, stained themselves with their own blood; and it happened that sons went madly against their own fathers, cuffing their throats and quenching their thirst with the very blood from which they had been generated. When they had perceived afterwards that this arose from the unjust bloody massacre and sacrilegious thefts committed in Poland, they sent back the Archdeacon and sacred vessels, and many embraced the faith of Jesus Christ. Now this fact would deserve to be represented on the facade of the Temple; and the picture of Posen may reasonably refer to this event, and not to the superstitious use of Christian blood to knead the Unleavened Bread, as is pretended by the Poles against the Jews.

If we wish to persuade ourselves fully about it, a negative limit may be adduced in favour of the Jews. Everybody knows that the immigration of the Jews into Poland took place after their expulsion from Spain, while before that time there was no vestige or memory of Jews in Poland.[1] Now it is certain that Ferdinand, called the Catholic, after having exterminated the Moors, who had tyrannized over Spain for eight centuries, promulgated an edict, dated March 30th, 1492, in which he ordered the Jews, on pain of death, either to receive Holy Baptism or else depart from all the realms of that monarchy. There went forth a hundred and seventy thousand families, in which it was calculated there were eight hundred thousand persons, who became scattered throughout Africa, Turkey,

[[1] This is not quite correct historically, as the record of the Jews in Poland goes back for some time earlier. Ganganelli is right, nevertheless, in supposing that their traces in the country before the fifteenth century were inconsiderable.]

Greece and Italy. Let us suppose that they subsequently passed into Poland; this, however, could not have happened before 1500. On this supposition, I do not see how one can infer an argument of fact against the Jews from a picture which is supposed to be older than the fifteenth century, when the Jews were not in Poland, and consequently could not have perpetrated there a deed which deserved to be painted on canvas and displayed on the facade of the Temple of Posen: "Behold how often human judgment errs!" [Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso,* canto I., stanza 7.]

I was obliged to make all these observations on the detailed information that came from Poland, because these are supported, as will now be seen, on the basis of pretended facts. These have already been made to disappear and confuted on the authority of historians. Hence the aforesaid reports in particular ought not, in my opinion, to cause any harm to the Jews.

III. REFLECTIONS ON THE REPORTS IN DETAIL

By order of this supreme Tribunal, Mgr. the Nuncio of Poland obtained reports concerning the petition of Jacob Selek the Jew, of Polish nationality, only from the Bishops of Lutzk and Kiev, which are given in the annexed summary, under the letters A, B and C.[1] With due respect, I will make the necessary observations on the same.

In the information of the Bishop of Lutzk (headed B) we read as follows:

> We may understand most plainly how many and how great proofs of cruelty towards Christian blood have been given in this kingdom (i.e. Poland) by the perfidious Jewish nation, not only from histories printed all over the world, but also from the judgments in cases of infanticide pronounced before various diocesan courts and also by the executions on the persons of the unfaithful (*it is this which gives just offence*) that followed in virtue of them from the year 1400 to the present time.

One gathers from the preface to this report that those prejudices about and against which I have reasoned in my first section (comprising Reflections upon the reports in general) exist in the mind of Mgr. the Bishop of Lutzk, and that the aforesaid report relies on

[[1] These Appendices are missing from the published texts of Ganganelli's Memorial. A is apparently the report of the Nuncio, B that of the Bishop of Lutzk, C that of the Bishop of Kiev.]

those same principles on which were fabricated the accusations against the Jews of Germany, France, Venice, Padua, Verona, Viterbo and Ancona. Therefore, if the Supreme Pontiffs Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. judged such accusations to be baseless (as I have clearly shown), and if the Jews were declared innocent in the other tribunals of Italy; I cannot see how they can be considered guilty of such a crime in Poland alone, and how,

from the year 1400 till the present time (that is to say; for nearly four centuries), they have continued to commit it, at the cost of such suffering both in property and in person.

Then, too, it seems that Mgr. the Bishop of Lutzk has shown himself too prone to believe what cannot be true, since, as has been observed, the Jews did not enter Poland till after 1500; so that, not being there in 1400, they could not commit the supposed crime there. Neither is it credible that, hardly having entered Poland, not as conquerors, but almost as slaves, they would have dared at the very beginning to make themselves more odious than they had been in Spain. Here, had they committed such a crime, they would have been killed and not exiled, in the same manner as the Moors were all slaughtered by order of Ferdinand because they were found guilty of murders, some committed and some designed. The Jews who would not embrace our Holy Faith, on the other hand, were merely exiled by the said Ferdinand. If then in Spain, where they dwelt so long and were so wealthy, the Jews were never accused of such a crime, how can it be credible that when they had scarcely arrived in Poland they at once began the epoch of infanticide and homicide?

I should like Mgr., the Bishop of Lutzk to undeceive himself by perusing the Decretal of Innocent IV., cited by me, which is to be found in Baronius, who continued the work of Raynaldus. There he would be able to see the same accusations which he brings against the Jews, together with their complete exoneration by the esteemed Supreme Pontiff.

It is now a hundred years since the Jews in Poland were first accused of such a crime. There were not wanting, however, persons to undertake their defence, and in order that this might be more powerful, they were proclaimed innocent by holy orators from the pulpits. Here is the authority for this statement. The Very Rev. Father Giovanni Battista de' Marini, General of the Order of Preaching Fathers, moved to pity by the Jews of Poland, who were being harassed by his imputation, wrote on February 9th, 1664, a very urgent letter to Father Alan Chodoruski, Provincial of Poland. In

this, he instructed the members of his Order in that Kingdom to preach from the pulpit and persuade the people to dismiss the evil opinion which obsessed them concerning the Jews, whom they believed to be the authors of the crime with which we are dealing:

> It has been humbly and sorrowfully shewn to us on the part of the unhappy Jews, who dwell scattered throughout the Kingdom of Poland, that they are malignantly traduced with various calumnies and imputations by the ignorant populace and by certain persons hostile to them through private malice; in particular on the charge that they are accustomed to use the blood of Christians in their rite of the Unleavened Bread. . . . We therefore, moved by righteous pity, earnestly charge your Paternity, through yourself and your Order, to succour this unhappy people against all unjust calumnies. If it be the part of Christian piety and gentleness to display the bowels of human charity to them also, when they are oppressed by injury, so particularly should your Paternity charge each preacher of the Divine Word through the entire province, in our name and yours, that they should exhort the people, in their sermons and on

> other occasions in general, not to offend our God by ill-treating this hapless race through unlawful hatreds, false accusations, abusive contumely or any insult and lust of cruelty. . . . Let the Jews find out in this matter that we desire not their destruction but their salvation.[1]

Such also were the sentiments of St. Bernard against Brother Rudolph, such the oracles of Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. against the Princes of Germany and France, as we have seen. The Lord grant, then, that a ray of this truth may break forth some time in Poland, where they offend our God by ill-treating this hapless race through unlawful hatreds, false accusations, abusive contumely. The offence against God ought indeed to be reputed so much the greater in this matter, the greater the obstacle that is set up against the conversion of those unhappy people. Wherefore the Divine anger was inexorable against the priest Eli and his family, because his sons, by their greed "kept men back from sacrificing to the Lord" [I. Samuel ii., 17]. Certainly there can be no confessor, however benign and indulgent he may be, who does not understand what grave injury is done to Divine Honour, what harm is done to an unbeliever, when he is given a motive to flee from the Light of the Gospel and to remain in the darkness of unbelief. This should be a matter for the consideration of Mgr. the Bishop of Lutzk; and he should consider himself happy when pastoral love may lead any one of these unhappy people to the fold of Jesus Christ not when, for a crime supposed and never proved, he consigns him to the executioner to be put to death.

[[1] For full text, see *Die Päpstlichen Bullen über die Blutbeschuldigung,* pp. 134-7.]

The Prelate of Lutzk then mentions the fact that the corpse of a Christian, who died of wounds, was thrown into a marsh near the castle of Yampol (a place in his diocese). This man is alleged to have been killed by the Jews on the basis of the following facts. First because "the slain man went among the Jews and continually dwelled in their company". Secondly, because the Jews, "led by a certain unwonted attraction towards a Christian corpse, attempted by force and prayers to bury it as soon as possible, in spite of the resistance of the Parish Priest and the protest of the people". Thirdly, because, it being necessary to remove the corpse that it might be identified in the Tribunal, "the Jews resisted its being taken, violently and by force". Fourthly and lastly, because "many secretly withdrew from the said city by flight."

Now let us discuss these proofs and consider their importance. Who can think it possible that the Jews of Poland, if they had murdered a Christian who was in their service, would afterwards want to leave the body of the dead man displayed to public view, and not bury it safely in a deep and dark grave? For the Jews of Poland know, and know by very painful experience, that a mere suspicion of homicide is enough to make them considered, and sentenced, as guilty!

I consider that the imputation of the murder of this Christian, whose body was found in the water (as is alleged by the Treasurer of Lutzk), is completely similar to the imputation

which was brought against the Jews of Germany in the time of Innocent IV. This is clearly recognized by what that great Pontiff wrote in the letter already cited by me, in which we read: "and they maliciously lay to their charge (that is, of the unhappy Jews) the body of a dead man, if it happens that one is found anywhere" Innocent IV. then considered that such an imputation was malicious—that is, not true, but false and calumnious. Yet now the Treasurer of Lutzk, endowed with greater discernment than a Roman Pontiff, immediately believes the fact, and immediately condemns the Jews as authors *ex professione* of such a crime, "although it be contrary to the Law", as the esteemed Pontiff affirms.

It is not therefore to be wondered that when the corpse was found, the Jews should have used all those devices described in the report alluded to, to prevent action being taken by the Treasurer; for they know by mournful experience that suspicion falls upon them at once by reason of the predominant prejudice against them, and the suspicion is not cleared away "without the shedding of blood" corporally and pecuniarily. If we desire proof of this

procedure, let us hear the testimony of the learned and zealous Father Giovanni Edera, of the Society of Jesus, who in the year 1692 was Reader in the Controversies of Faith in Prague. He, then, speaking of the Christians in Prague, and of their hatred of the Jews, says thus: "It is a well-known and manifest thing that . . . more than once, and *for the very slightest causes,* the populace sacked the Jews' quarter and their Rag Market, seriously wounding many of them, and killing others." Thus the learned Father Edera. If then, in Prague, for the very slightest causes, the wretched Jews are seriously wounded and even killed by the Christian populace, what, even more terrible, should the unhappy creatures not fear in Poland, where the prejudice of the Christians against them is greater and where such frequent executions are made amongst them? Hence it is easy to understand why the Jews tried all the methods described in the report of the Curia of Lutzk of avoiding the official identification of that corpse, and why some of them had recourse to flight, the unfortunate creatures being only too sure that in such an event they were bound to perish. Whence every sensible man may rationally infer that the supposed homicide cannot be imputed to the Jews, not only for the general reason deduced by Innocent IV., "because it is contrary to the Law", but also because they would not have left the dead man's body to public view, at evident risk to themselves.

But what would the Treasurer of Lutzk say if it were proved that such a monstrous crime has sometimes (God forbid that it should be always!) been committed by Christians—even by the father himself!—and then imputed to the unhappy Jews? I blush at suspecting it, but I am much more embarrassed at producing the authentic record of it marked D.[1] Here we read that a Christian father mutilated a tender daughter of his in several places with mortal wounds, and, wrapping her in cloths, abandoned her in the manger of a stable in an inn, kept (according to the custom of Poland) by Jews. Here we read that this little girl, surviving by the Divine Will, confessed out of her own mouth that she had been ill-

treated, with so many wounds and mutilations, by her own father. Yet suspicion had already been formed against the Jews and it was already desired to proceed against them!

It is not necessary that I should delay to recount what the Prelate of Kiev says, because the greater part of his information may be called an Apology for his conduct, defending himself against the

[1 Published by Stern, *ubi supra*, pp. 138-142.]

charge of "cursed hunger for gold". I will only add that we Christians ought to remember that this stain of infanticide and of homicide was imputed against our Religion by the Pagans in the first centuries. Let us hear what Tertullian says, in his Apology, Ch. 7. "We are said to be guilty of the sacrament of infanticide. . . . You, on the other hand (he is addressing the Pagans) do not take steps to suppress the practice we have been charged with for so long. Either suppress it, if you believe in it; or stop believing in it if you will not suppress it". Octavius, a celebrated apologist of our Religion in its early days (quoted by Minucius Felix), also cleared Christianity from this stain which was imputed to it by Caecilius, a famous advocate of Paganism. "I should like to meet him (that is Caecilius) who says, or believes, that we initiate with the corpse or blood of a child. . . . It is lawful for us neither to see nor to hear homicide". Similarly Athenagoras, a valiant defender of us Christians at the Courts of the heathen Emperors, freed us from this calumny, saying, "Who therefore, unless he be mad, can call us murderers, seeing how we live? Moreover, if anyone asks them if they have seen what they recount, none is so impudent a liar as to avow it". Theodoret relates that Palladius, named the Divine, was thought guilty of homicide, because a slain man was found at the door of his house. The people wished to proceed against him—I was going to say, in the Polish fashion—because, as Theodoret tells us, "all the people met together and, breaking down the door, wished to exact from the Divine Palladius the penalty of the murder committed". The miracle of resuscitating the dead man, who declared the innocence of Palladius and pointed out the murderer there present, was necessary in order to liberate him. "For the Divine Palladius (adds Theodoret), though admirable before, hence rightly became far more admirable". St. Macarius, who was accused of murder, did the same thing as Rufinus tells in Book 2, Ch. 1, of the *Lives of the Fathers*. A certain Deacon named John, an intimate friend of the Holy Abbot Simeon, was thought a guilty murderer because a slain man had been found dead in his house. "The matter was reported to the Magistrate, who pronounced sentence that John the Deacon should be hung on the gallows". The sentence would have been executed, had not the Holy Abbot Simeon with his prayers entreated from Heaven the miraculous discovery of the innocence of the Deacon John, as may be read in the Acts of the Holy Abbot. What did the Swedes leave undone, in the last century, during the invasion of Germany, and especially against some Jesuit Fathers in Paderborn? They accused the inno-

cent ecclesiastics of having murdered a boy, and thrown him afterwards into a well. All were therefore exiled, and their College was despoiled of all its substance. The mistake was discovered when it was found out that it was a stork, and not a child, which was engulfed in that well! From this episode, Angelino Gareo took the subject of a witty song which may be read in the second part of *Jests of the Pious.*

From that which has been concluded up to this point, it may be realised with what lively faith we ought to ask God with the Psalmist, "Deliver me from the calumnies of men". For it cannot be denied that "Calumny maketh the wise man mad, and destroyeth the strength of his heart", as Ecclesiastes says, Ch. vii. [verse 7].

I therefore hope that the Holy See will take some measure to protect the Jews of Poland, as St. Bernard, Gregory IX., and Innocent IV. did for the Jews of Germany and of France, "that the name of Christ be not blasphemed" by the Jews and, moreover, that their conversion may not become more difficult. I do not venture however to put forward any project to liberate these unfortunates from such ill-usage, hoping that Jesus Christ will suggest to his Vicar such means as shall be honourable to the Christian name and conducive to the conversion of those unhappy ones.

I, FRIAR LORENZO GANGANELLI, Consultor of the Holy Office.

> Referred as above to the said Consultors.
>
> On Monday 24th [December] 1759, they decided that in the matter under discussion a letter should be written to the Very Reverend Father Nuncio in Poland in accordance with a form to be drawn up by the Very Reverend Father Consultor (now the most Eminent and most Reverend Cardinal Ganganelli), based upon the arguments set forth by him in his written report.[1]

[[1] A note at the beginning of the text published by Zaviziano indicates that the Report was read before the Pope, Clement XIII., on Thursday, January 10th, 1760.]

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE INNOCENT IV. AGAINST THE BLOOD ACCUSATION.

As has been seen above, one of the earliest and most weighty Papal pronouncements against the Blood Accusation was that issued by Pope Innocent IV. to the Archbishops and Bishops of Germany and France on July 5th, 1247. Since the authenticity of this document has also been called into question, it is desirable to give here a translation of the full text (the authenticity of which was vouched for by the Cardinal Secretary of State in the letter published above). A considerable portion of the original Latin is cited in the Report of Cardinal Ganganelli, *supra,* pp. 46-7. The full text may be found in A. Potthast, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum* (Berlin, 1875), § 12,596: E. Berger, *Registres d'Innocent IV.* (Paris, 1884-1911), § 3,077; Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici,* vol. xiii, *sub die et anno:* S. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1933), § 116, etc.

To the Archbishops and Bishops of Germany

We have received a mournful complaint from the Jews of Germany, telling how some princes, both ecclesiastical and lay, together with other nobles and powerful persons in your cities and dioceses, devise evil plans against them and invent various pretexts in order to rob them unjustly of their goods, and gain possession thereof. This they do without stopping to consider prudently that it is from the archives of the Jews, so to speak, that the testimonies of the Christian faith came forth. Holy Scripture pronounces among other injunctions of the Law *'Thou shalt not kill',* forbidding them when they celebrate the Passover even to touch any dead body. Nevertheless, they are falsely accused that, in that same solemnity, they make communion with the heart of a slain child. This is alleged to be enjoined by the Law, whereas in fact such an act is manifestly contrary to it. Moreover, if the body of a dead man is by chance found anywhere, they maliciously ascribe the cause of death to the action of the Jews.

On this, and many other fictitious pretexts, they rage against the Jews and despoil them of their possessions, against God and Justice and the privileges mercifully granted to them by the Holy

See; notwithstanding that they have never been tried for these crimes and have never confessed them and have never been convicted of them. By starvation, imprisonment and many heavy persecutions and oppressions they harass them, inflicting upon them divers kinds of punishment, and condemning large numbers to a most shameful death. Hence the Jews, who are under the power of the aforesaid nobles, lords and princes, are in a worse condition than were their fathers in Egypt, and are compelled to go into exile from

localities where they and their ancestors have dwelt from time immemorial. Wherefore, fearing that they would be utterly exterminated, they have thought well to have recourse to the wisdom of the Apostolic See. We, therefore, being unwilling that the aforesaid Jews should be unjustly harassed (seeing that the compassionate God expects their conversion, and that we believe, according to the testimony of the prophet, that the remnant of them shall be saved), do ordain that you show yourselves favourable and benign towards them. Duly redress all that has been wrought against the Jews in the aforesaid matter by the said prelates, nobles and potentates; and do not allow them in future to be unjustly molested by anybody on this or any other similar charge.

Given in Lyons on July 5th, in the fifth year of our Pontificate (1247).

(*The Archbishops and Bishops of France were addressed in a similar manner.*)

APPENDIX B.

OTHER PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE BLOOD ACCUSATION.

It is only right to make it clear that the attempt to suppress the Blood Libel was not confined to the Popes, although they combated it most systematically and most energetically. Lesser ecclesiastical authorities and secular rulers were sometimes no less outspoken. In 1235, for example, after a charge of ritual murder had led to the execution of some thirty-four Jews at Fulda (Hesse-Nassau), their co-religionists secured an official enquiry into the matter from the Emperor, Frederick II., who, true to his intensely rational nature, showed no credulity in the matter. A diet held at Hagenau failed to arrive at any definite conclusion. Accordingly, Frederick invited all the kings of the Occident to send him converts from Judaism, with a profound knowledge of Jewish law, in order to conduct an enquiry. After prolonged meetings, this commission declared that it was written neither in the Old Testament, nor in the New, that the Jews made use of human blood, the consumption of which was forbidden both in the Mosaic code and the Talmud. Under such circumstances (quite apart from the heinousness of the crime in itself), it was not likely that the Jews would deliberately incur such risk in order to obtain blood for ritual purposes. On the basis of this extremely logical and categorical conclusion, the Emperor exonerated the Jews, and forbade this charge to be levied against them any more.

In subsequent years, too, various Emperors and rulers faithfully followed the Papal lead. In 1254, Premysl-Ottokar II., King of Bohemia, republished the paragraph condemning the Blood Libel added to the *Constitutio Judaeorum* by Innocent IV. To this he appended a warning that in future all such cases should be investigated thoroughly before action was taken, and that if it were found groundless the Christian accuser would suffer the fate he had intended for the Jews. Pope Gregory X.'s repudiation of 1274 was in turn republished by Rudolph of Hapsburg (1275). The Emperors Frederick III. (1470), Charles V. (1544) and Maximilian II. (1566); Doge Pietro Mocenigo and the Venetian

Senate (1475); Bona and Gian Galeazzo Sforza, of Milan (1479) Vicenzo I., Duke of Mantua and Monferrato (c. 1600); Kings Boleslaw (1264), Casimir III. (1334), Casimir IV. (1453) and Stephen Bathory (1576) of Poland, and the Sultan 'Abd al Majid of Turkey (1840), were among other secular rulers who condemned the libel in unqualified terms. Apart from political authorities, one may mention persons of the calibre and spiritual influence of Martin Luther (1537); Giulio Caretto, Bishop of Casale (1611); Giovanni Battista de' Marini, Vicar-General of the Dominican Order (1664); Hugo Grotius, the greatest jurist of his or perhaps any other age (1636); Johann Christoph Wagenseil, the erudite Christian Hebraist (1706); and many another. Later Gentile testimony (subsequent to the time of which we are treating) includes that of men of the eminence of Ernest Renan, Cardinal Manning, Cardinal Bourne, Franz Delitzsch, Professor Noldecke, and many more.[1]

[1] Details may be found in Strack: *The Jew and Human Sacrifice* (London 1909; from the German); Guidetti: *Pro Judæis* (Turin, 1884) pp. 276-383; Zaviziano: *Un raggio di luce* (Corfu, 1891) pp. 73-294: Hildesheimer in *Jüdische Presse,* 1892, nos. 13-19, 21.

APPENDIX C.

PROTESTS AGAINST THE KIEV RITUAL MURDER ACCUSATIONS, 1912.

(i.) THE BRITISH PROTEST.

We desire to associate ourselves with the protests signed in Russia, France, and Germany by leading Christian Theologians, Men of Letters, Scientists, Politicians and others against the attempt made in the City of Kieff to revive the hideous charge of Ritual Murder—known as the "Blood Accusation"—against Judaism and the Jewish people.

Animated by the sincerest friendship for Russia, we can have no idea of meddling with the domestic concerns of that country. Much less do we wish to prejudice in the slightest degree the course of the criminal trial with which this accusation has become identified. In the terms of the published protest of our Russian colleagues and friends and in their intimation that they welcome support from other countries, we have the best assurances that our motives will not be misinterpreted.

The question is one of humanity, civilisation and truth. The "Blood Accusation" is a relic of the days of Witchcraft and Black Magic, a cruel and utterly baseless libel on Judaism, an insult to Western culture and a dishonour to the Churches in whose name it has been falsely formulated by ignorant fanatics. Religious minorities other than the Jews, such as

the Early Christians, the Quakers, and Christian Missionaries in China, have been victimised by it. It has been denounced by the best men of all ages and creeds. The Popes, the Founders of the Reformation, the Khalif of Islam, Statesmen of every country, together with all the great seats of learning in Europe, have publicly repudiated it.

It is the more necessary that these testimonies should be renewed because, among the ignorant and inflammable populace of Eastern Europe, the "Blood Accusation" has often given rise to terrible outbreaks of mob violence against the Jews, and there is grave reason to fear that its present resuscitation may endanger many innocent lives in the crowded Jewries of the Russian Empire.

Signed by:

The Archbishops of Canterbury, York, Armagh; the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and the heads of all other Christian denominations.
The Bishops of London, Oxford, Worcester, Winchester, etc.; the Deans of Westminster, Canterbury, Norwich, Ripon, etc.
The Dukes of Norfolk and Northumberland, and the Earls of Rosebery, Salborne, Cromer, and Milner; A. J. Balfour, etc.
Frederic Harrison, Thos. Hardy, A. V. Dicey, Sir William Osier, Sir Francis Darwin, etc.
Sir Oliver Lodge, the Principals of eleven Oxford Colleges, the Masters of seven Cambridge Colleges, S. R. Driver, F. C.
Burkitt, A. E. Cowley, W. Sanday, H. B. Swete, Estlin Carpenter, etc.
Justices Eve, Warrington, and Vaughan Williams.
The Editors of the *Edinburgh, Quarterly, Fortnightly*, of the *Hibbert, Spectator, Daily Telegraph, Daily Chronicle,* etc., etc.[1]

(ii.) THE FRENCH PROTEST.

The undersigned, friends of Russia and strangers to Judaism, denounce to public opinion the absurd accusation of Ritual Murder brought against the Jew Beilis, of Kieff.

They affirm as follows:—

1. That, so far from requiring blood for its rites, the religion of Israel prohibits its use both for ceremonial purposes and for food, and that this absolute prohibition is rigorously respected by all the Jewish sects.

2. That in all ages and in all countries religious minorities have been victims of this same calumny—the early Christians under the Roman Emperors, as well as quite recently the missionaries in China.

They express the hope that such accusations may no longer find credence in any civilised country.

Signed by ANATOLE FRANCE, and 165 other leaders of French opinion.

[1] A full list of the names of the signatories to this and the other documents printed in this Appendix may be found in *The Kieff Ritual Murder Accusation: Protests from leading Christians in Europe.* (London [1912].)

(iii.) THE GERMAN PROTEST.

On the 12th March, 1911, the boy Andrew Yuschinsky was murdered at Kieff. In spite of every effort, no convincing evidence of the authorship of the crime has yet been discovered. A Jew has, however, been arrested and charged, and the inquiry against him is now in progress.

Whether this Jew is the murderer we cannot judge. It would not be proper to anticipate a judicial decision in a case which is still pending, especially when it is being tried in another country.

But there is one aspect of the case which compels us in accordance with our consciences to adopt a certain attitude.

Mob agitators have eagerly seized on the crime, and have boldly asserted that the boy Yuschinsky was slaughtered by Jews in order to drain his blood and use it for ritual purposes, in obedience to an alleged Jewish religious law. This unscrupulous fiction, spread among the people, has from the Middle Ages until recent times led to terrible consequences. It has incited the ignorant masses to outrage and massacre, and has driven misguided crowds to to [*sic*] pollute themselves with the innocent blood of their Jewish fellow-men. And yet not a shadow of proof has ever been adduced to justify this crazy belief. The most esteemed Christian authorities on Jewish literature have proved incontrovertibly that the Jews have never been exhorted by their religion to murder their fellow-men.

We deem it the duty of every one to whose heart the moral progress of mankind is dear to raise his voice against such deplorable absurdities. We thus join in the Protest of the most esteemed Russian scholars, authors, and artists, believing that such a protest should not be limited by frontiers, but should concern the heart of the whole civilised world.

19th March, 1912.

Signed by the Burgomaster of Berlin, 22 members of the Reichstag, and 192 other leaders of German public opinion, as well as 9 Danish scholars and theologians.

(iv.) THE RUSSIAN PROTEST.

To the Russian Public, on the blood libel upon the Jews.

In the name of justice, reason and humanity we raise our voices against this new outbreak of fanaticism and black mendacity.

The eternal struggle of humanity on behalf of liberty, legal

equality, and fraternity, and against slavery, hate, and social discord, has been with us from ancient times. And in our own time, as always, the same persons who uphold the outlawed condition of their own people are the most persistent to excite among them the spirit of religious and racial enmity. While they have no consideration for popular opinion, or popular rights, which they are ready to suppress by the severest measures, they flatter popular prejudices, fan the flames of superstition, and incite to deeds of violence against their countrymen of other races.

In connection with the still uninvestigated murder of the boy Yuschinsky at Kieff, the false story of the use of Christian blood by Jews has been sown broadcast once more among the people. This is a familiar device of ancient fanaticism. In the early ages A.D., the pagan priests used to accuse the Christians of partaking of the Communion with the blood and flesh of a pagan infant killed for the purpose, and in that way explained the mystery of the Eucharist. Thus it was that this dark and malicious legend arose. The first blood shed on its account, by the prejudiced sentences of Roman judges and amid the shouts of the ignorant pagan crowd, was the blood of Christians. And the first to disprove it were the Fathers and the teachers of the Christian Church. "Be ashamed"—wrote St. Justin the Martyr in his address to the Roman Senate—"be ashamed to attribute such crimes to men who are not concerned in them. Stay! Come to your senses!"

"But where are your proofs?" indignantly asked another teacher of the Christian Church—Tertullian. "Mere rumour. But every one knows the nature of rumour. . . . It is nearly always false. . . . It only lives by lies. . . . Who, then, believes rumour?"

By this time the falsity of the legend which accused the early Christians is as clear as noonday. But, invented by hate, adopted by blind ignorance, the absurd invention did not die out. It has become an instrument of enmity and dissension even among Christians themselves. It has gone so far that in some places a Roman Catholic majority will cast the accusation upon the Lutherans, while a majority of the latter will brand with it the Roman Catholics.

But the greatest sufferers from this fiction are the Jews who are scattered among other

nations. The *pogroms* caused by it have drawn a trail of blood through the dark history of the Middle Ages. At all times murders happen, the motives and authorship of which are a source of perplexity. Where there is a Jewish population it is a simple matter to explain such crimes by the alleged ritual use

of blood. Such a thing excites ignorant superstition, and thus influences the evidence of witnesses, deprives the judges of calmness and impartiality, and leads to judicial errors and *pogroms.*

Frequently the truth has eventually come to light, though too late. Sensible and just men would then be seized by shame and indignation. Many Popes and spiritual and secular rulers have branded the malicious superstition and forbidden the authorities to lend to its investigation a religious meaning. Among us such a ukase was issued on March 18th, 1817, by the Emperor Alexander I., and was confirmed on January 3oth, 1835, in the reign of the Emperor Nicholas I. In 1870 the Greek Patriarch Gregory also condemned the blood legend applied to the Jews, and declared it to be a "disgusting prejudice of men infirm in their faith."

But ukases are mouldering in State archives while superstitions skulk abroad, and now the old lie, fraught with violence and *pogroms,* is being circulated again, even from the tribune of the State Duma.

In this lie there is the ring of the same malice which once incited the blind pagan crowd against the early followers of the Christian doctrine. Not long ago in China, where the same fable about the use of infant blood was circulated by Chinese priests against the missionaries, it cost the lives of hundreds of Christians and Europeans. Dark and criminal passions always follow in its train, while it always tends to blind the populace and pervert justice.

But sentiments of love and truth must always combat it. The words of Justin the Martyr do not apply to the Roman Senate alone.

"Be ashamed; be ashamed to ascribe such a crime to men who are not concerned in it. Stay! Come to your senses!"

We join our voices to this holy Christian voice, whose appeal to love and reason rings through the depth of ages.

Fear those who sow falsely. Believe not the black lie which has so often made itself red with blood, killing some and covering others with sin and shame.

Signed by 6 Members of the Council of State, 68 Members of the Duma, 3 Academicians, 14 Professors at Universities and Academies, 59 Politicians, Lawyers, Scientists, Authors,

Artists, etc., and 9 illustrious woman leaders.

APPENDIX D.

BRITISH OPINION AND "DER STÜRMER"
(See above, p. 17, *Note*.)

(i.) *Leading Article in "The Times," May* 11*th*, 1934.
"RITUAL MURDER."

Dr. Hertz shows singular restraint in his protest this morning[1] against the revival of the baseless accusation that ritual murder, or in other words human sacrifice, is permitted by the Jewish religion. If this charge had been resuscitated by some minor pamphleteer of the new Nordic school, which "perverts the Prophets and purloins the Psalms" in the supposed interests of German culture, its importance would have been merely pathological. Unfortunately this is not the case. Its author is no less a person than Herr Julius Streicher, one of the most prominent members of the Nazi "inner circle," head of the administrative provinces of Upper and Central Franconia, and entitled in that capacity to take part in Bavarian Cabinet Councils. On May 1st he published a special "Ritual Murder" number of his newspaper, *Der Stürmer*, which was entirely devoted to sadistic variations on this repulsive theme. Although the Government of the Reich have not permitted this number of *Der Stürmer* to be sent abroad, and although it has disgusted many members of the National-Socialist Party, there seems to have been no interference with the sale of the 130,000 copies which were printed or with subsequent and little less violent issues of Herr Streicher's organ. A brief summary of the contents of this production, which was published in *The Times* yesterday, described them as "apparently designed to excite racial fanaticism to a bloodthirsty pitch."

Apart from the danger involved in the publication of such obvious incitements to violence, the official toleration of an ancient calumny is calculated to do grave damage to the intellectual reputation of the new Germany. As Dr. Hertz points out, the raising of this charge in the famous Kieff trial of 1912 evoked a protest signed by more than 200 of the most distinguished non-Jewish

[1] See pages 207-8 *post.*

Germans of the day. A similar protest signed by an equally distinguished body of British citizens—which included the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Cardinal Bourne, Lord Roberts, Lord Cromer, Lord Milner, and many other famous names—was published

in *The Times* on the same occasion. They pointed out that this "cruel libel" had been directed at various times against the Jews, against the early Christians, against Christian missionaries in China and other religious minorities; and that it had been repudiated, not only by the Jews themselves, but also by the Heads of the Christian Churches and by the Caliph of Islam. Its unchecked revival, if only for internal consumption in Germany, must inevitably strengthen the misgivings aroused by the sacrifice of reason to instinct, and of historical truth to racial prejudice, which characterizes so much of the Nazi propaganda.

(ii.) *Letter from the Chief Rabbi.*
(*The Times,* May 11th, 1934.)

To the Editor of "The Times".

Sir,—In your issue of this morning you rightly state that the "Ritual Murder" number of Herr Julius Streicher's *Stuermer* "is apparently designed to excite racial fanaticism to a bloodthirsty pitch."

In this connexion would you permit me to recall to your readers the protest, signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and others, that appeared in your columns on May 6th, 1912? In that protest the ritual murder calumny is described as

> "a relic of the days of witchcraft and 'black magic,' a cruel and utterly baseless libel on Judaism. . . . Religious minorities other than the Jews, such as the early Christians, the Quakers, and Christian missionaries in China, have been victimized by it. It has been denounced by the best men of all ages and creeds. The Popes, the founders of the Reformation, the Khalif of Islam, statesmen of every country, together with all the great seats of learning in Europe, have publicly repudiated it".

It is well to note that on March 19th of the same year a protest couched in similar terms was published over the signatures of 215 of the most distinguished non-Jewish representatives of German public life, learning, literature, theology, science, and the arts.

It says:—

> This unscrupulous fiction, spread among the people, has from the Middle Ages until recent times led to terrible consequences. It has incited the ignorant masses to outrage and massacre, and has driven misguided crowds to pollute themselves with the innocent blood of their Jewish fellow-men. And yet not a shadow of proof has ever been adduced to justify this crazy belief.

I am, yours faithfully,

J. H. HERTZ, Chief Rabbi.

Office of the Chief Rabbi,
4, St. James's Place, Aldgate, E.C.3,
May 10.

(iii.) *Protest from the President of the Folk-lore Society*

(*The Times,* May 15th, 1934).

"RITUAL MURDER"

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir,—May I ask for a few lines of your space in order to endorse most heartily the remarks made in to-day's issue by the Chief Rabbi, and in your leading article, regarding the recent revival in Hitlerite Germany of the many times refuted slander of "Ritual Murder" against the Jews? In refusing the least credence to it, you and the Chief Rabbi have the support of every anthropologist and folk-lorist through the entire world.

I am, Sir, &c.,

H. J. ROSE, President, The Folk-lore Society.

May 11.

(iv.) *Protest from the Archbishop of Canterbury*
(*The Times,* May 16th, 1934).

To the Editor of "The Times".

Sir,—Permit me to add my own to the other protests which you have already printed against the publication in Germany of the May number of the periodical entitled *Der Stürmer* under the name of Herr Julius Streicher, the recently appointed Reich Commissioner in Upper Franconia. Though significantly its

export from Germany was prohibited, I have just been able to see a copy of it. It rakes up legends and lies about the alleged custom or ritual murder by the Jews which have been over and over again exposed. It contains a series of gruesome and disgusting illustrations. It seems almost incredible that such a publication recalling the worst excesses of medieval fanaticism should have been permitted in any civilized country; yet it bears the name of a

high officer of the Reich.

I am permitted by some 40 representatives of Christian public opinion in this country, assembled in my house for another purpose, to say that they associate themselves strongly with this protest. But it is needless to collect names. I am satisfied that the whole body of our fellow-citizens if they realized the character of this publication would share our indignation. If the authorities of the Reich wish to secure for themselves and for their State the respect and good will of the people of this country, let them promptly disown the issue under the name of one of their own number of this odious incitement to religious bigotry and, it may well be, to renewed and brutal persecution.

I am, Sir, &c.,

COSMO CANTUAR:

Lambeth Palace, May 15.

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[1] The present Bibliography on the Blood Accusation (comprising only a small selection of the vast literature on the subject) includes also some of the more notable works issued in recent years by those who credit it.

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